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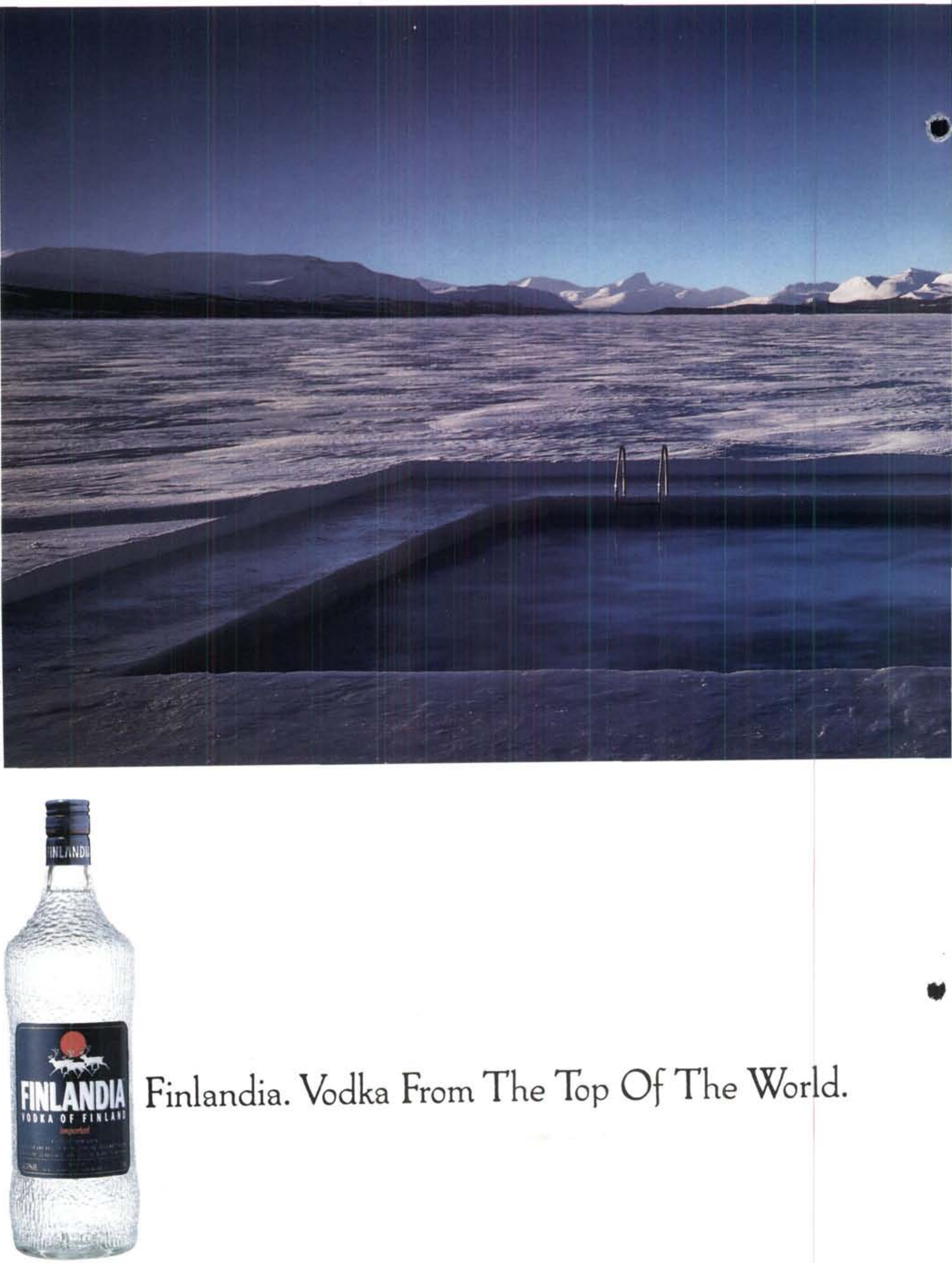
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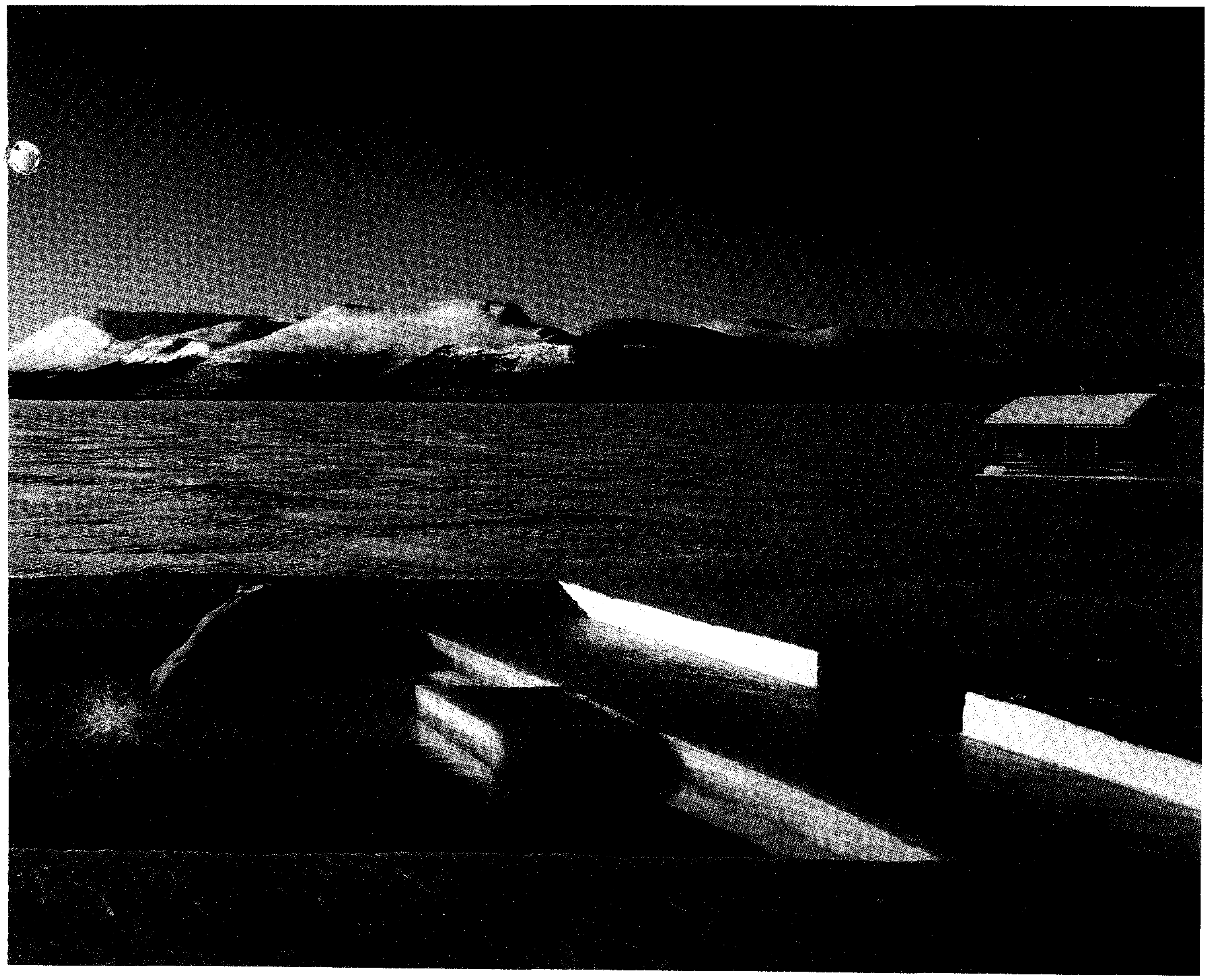

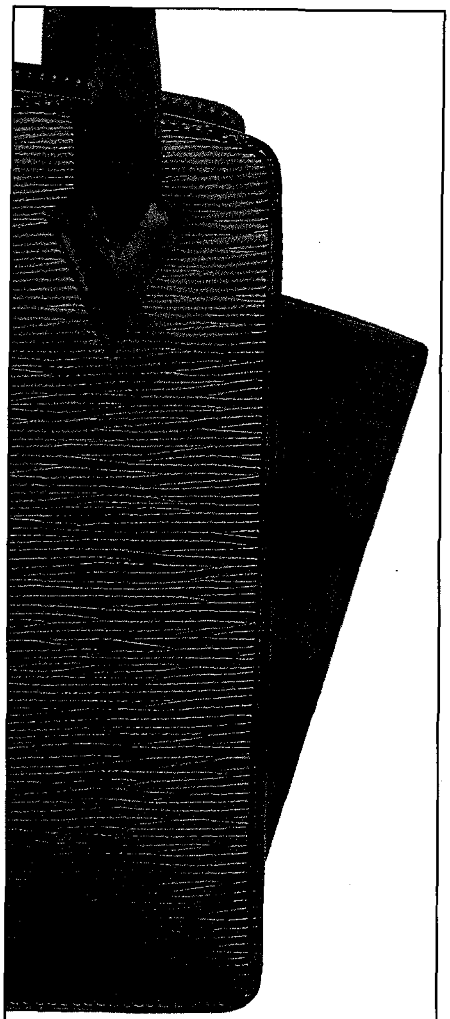

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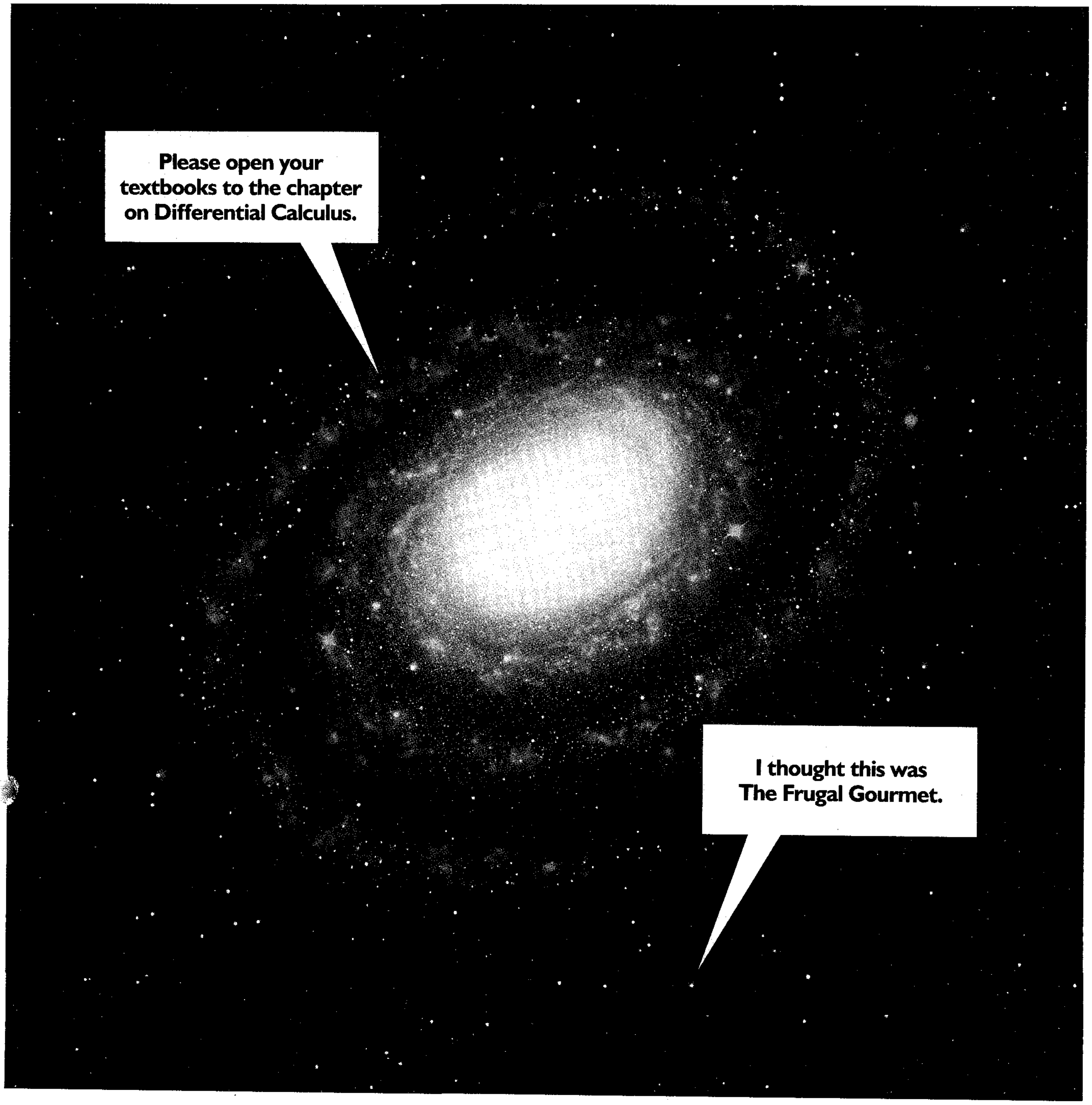
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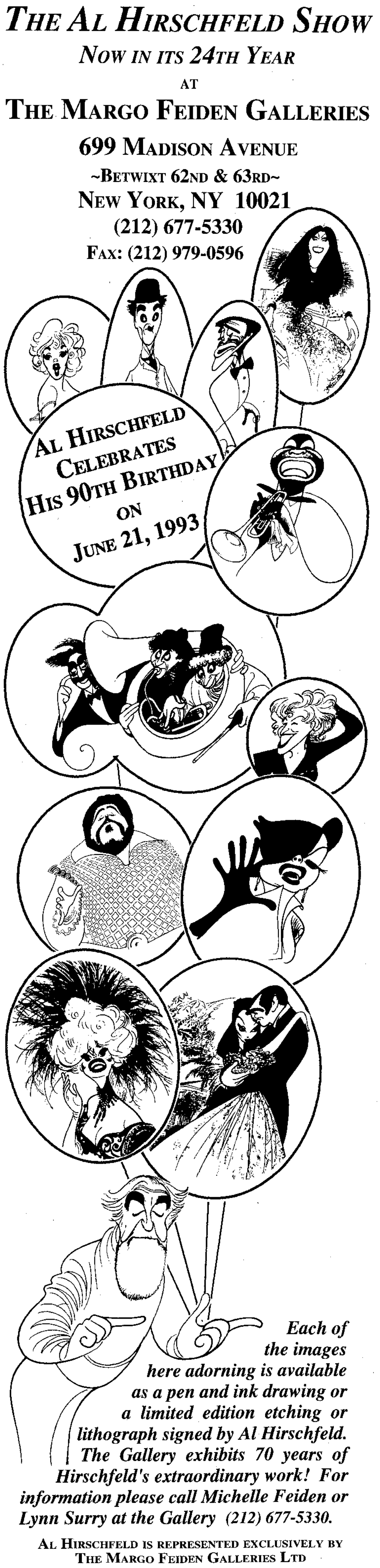
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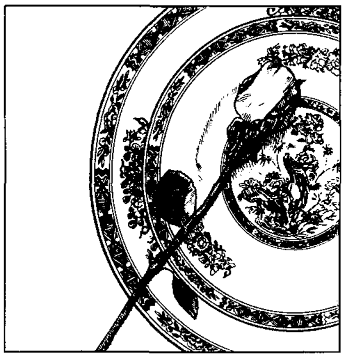

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COMMENT

STUMPING FOR SUBSTANCE

DURING the last few weeks, Americans have had a chance to witness one of those great migrations of columnists, reporters, anchors, commentators, and guest experts which are the media world's answer to the wildebeests crossing the plains of Africa. When it began, we were just getting used to the idea of a new President with some new ideas, and our opinion-molders, like the country at large, seemed unsure where they stood. By the time their journey was over, they had arrived at a place where they looked more comfortable: confident unanimity. Bill Clinton, we were told by authorities too numerous to mention, had bungled things—bungled them so badly that, according to Ted Koppel on "Nightline," the question being asked by "Washington insiders" (a group not easily distinguished from those who, like Koppel, report on them) was whether his problems were "still soluble." David Gergen, on the same program, generously gave the President another hundred days to undo the damage.

After huddling with his advisers and apologizing for a lack of focus, the President made a series of public appearances around the country, and was promptly told to go home and get serious. A former Bush Administration aide, Richard N. Haass, pointed out in *Newsday* that the election was over, and that "campaigning and governing are very different enterprises." Margaret Carlson, *Time's* White House correspondent, suggested that Clinton, in the hundred days that were now behind him, had been too open, too consultative, and just plain too nice. Appearing on C-SPAN, she took Clinton to task for having Dan Rostenkowski to dinner mere hours after Rostenkowski ridiculed the Administration's health-care ideas. Joe Klein, in *Newsweek*, homed in on Clinton's "Squish Factor," and advised him to be clearer both about what he is for and about what (and whom) he is against. These are people who, on occasion, seem rather less riveted by what the President is saying than by what they themselves are saying about what the President is saying.

A flock of commentators urged the

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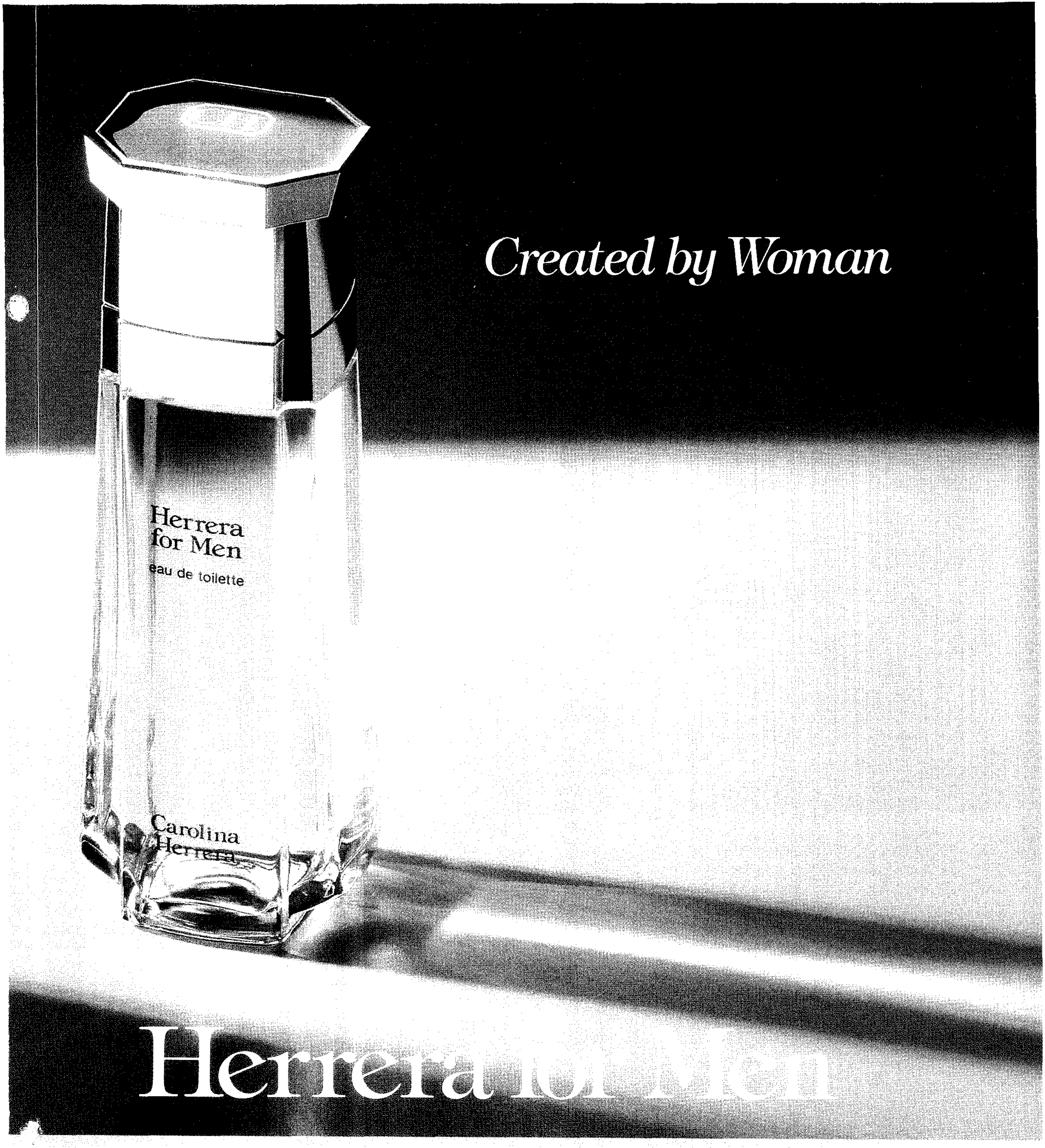
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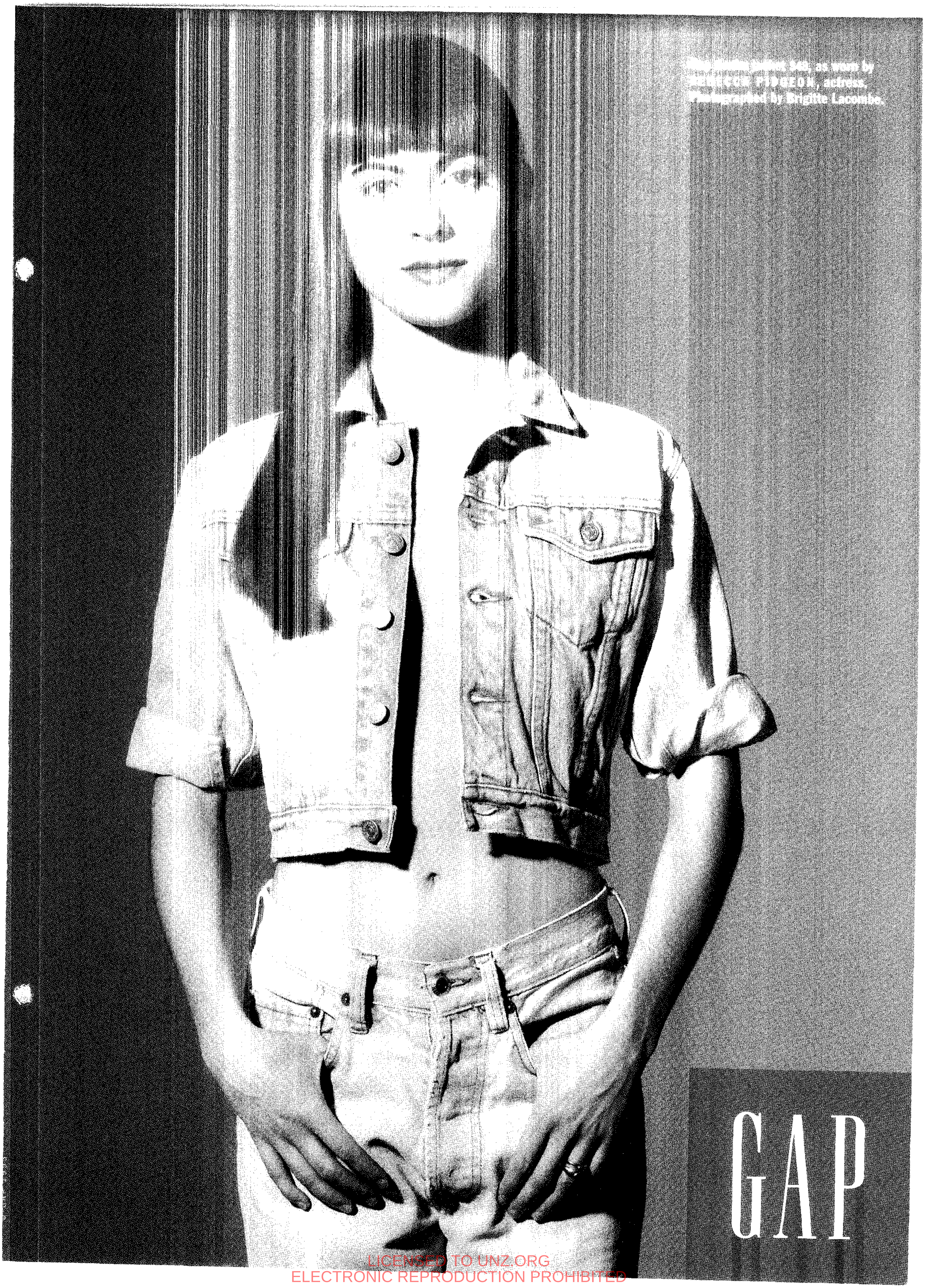
President to emulate the knock-heads, wheel-and-deal style of Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson. This is an understandable longing, for Roosevelt and Johnson, however dissimilar, are the readiest models we have of Presidents who, like Clinton, believed in the utility of government, and who succeeded in getting ambitious legislative programs enacted. But it may be that Clinton's critics are in the grip of a deluded nostalgia. The delusion only begins with the fact that Roosevelt and Johnson enjoyed big majorities in Congress—so big that hastily fashioned and, in some cases, later regretted proposals were swept into law along with the rest. (No one thought it odd that Roosevelt and Johnson, like Clinton, put forward a multitude of proposals simultaneously; one political moment's lack of focus is another's creative ferment.) The larger point being forgotten is that, insofar as those leaders were able to rush their programs through, the process depended on what was, by today's standards, an extraordinary degree of secrecy—or, at least, of delayed visibility. If the insiders quietly agreed on something that Roosevelt or Johnson proposed, their agreement was often enough to get it accomplished, because the public was then far less conscious of the details of unfolding policy. Today, when a piece of legislation threatens (or appears to threaten) the immediate interests of some parish of Americans, opposition mobilizes immediately. Not only lobbyists but, with their well-financed nudging, actual people rush to communicate their feelings, by phone, fax, and instant poll. Congress can be scared witless at midnight of something that at high noon it firmly intended to do.

It is customary to decry the role of television in American politics, and no wonder. But television is still young, so perhaps it, too, has been summed up prematurely. The Washington *Post*, in a high-minded editorial, warned the President last week that his problems were "not about public relations but about governing." That is certainly true if public relations means the usual round of sound-bites and photo ops geared toward the evening news and if the tone is the usual one of relentless rah-rah. During the Presidential campaign and since, however, the political and the media worlds have joined in de-facto collaboration to create some promising new modes of televised discourse: town-hall meetings, seminar-style conferences, and long-form interviews with and without open phone lines. In a similar spirit, the House Majority Leader, Richard Gephardt, has proposed a question-and-answer period in which the President and the House could hash things out in full view. If public relations means more of this sort of thing—if it means a serious, sustained airing of a health-care plan or a campaign-finance bill, and if the discussion embraces not only the substance of a proposal but the process by which it has been fashioned, so that the public (or a significant slice of the public, at least) can understand its compromises and its costs, and the reasons for them—then who is to say that government is not "about" (among other things, of course) public relations? A year ago, Candidate Clinton was trying to sell voters on a set of general proposals that, in the way of election-year proposals, blurred certain problems, such as the size of the deficit. Why should President Clinton work any less hard to win the consent of the governed for a set of specific proposals, forged under necessarily different circumstances, whose purpose is to mend an ailing economy?

As part of its effort to be alert to the excesses of the campaign mentality, perhaps the press ought to check the mirror. A four-year term may seem very short when it's measured against the problems facing the country, but four years is nowhere near short enough, evidently, for many of those who cover our government for a living. To judge by their current fixation on how, rather than what, the President is doing, they want to turn every year into an election year. Paradoxically, it was partly to counter this tendency that Clinton went off barnstorming: he was trying to draw attention back to the very substance he was accused of fleeing. He may need to do not less campaigning but more.♦



[illegible] jacket 348, as worn by REBECCA PIDGEON, actress. Photographed by Brigitte Lacombe.

GAP

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THE THEATRE

Dusting It Off

Of the thirty-two shows that opened on Broadway during the 1992-93 season, not one was a revival of a major musical. As if to remedy the situation, the season just under way promises, at the very least, "Camelot," "My Fair Lady," "Carousel," "Damn Yankees," and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." It's hard not to posit demographics as a reason for the rash of old shows: baby boomers can without weariness revisit the staples of their youth while their children can look upon Higgins and Bigelow and crew with fresh eyes. Call it the "Tommy" syndrome.

Paving the way for the warhorses will be the Roundabout's "She Loves Me," a 1963 musical by Joe Masteroff, Jerry Bock, and Sheldon Harnick. The show's story—a romance between a salesgirl and her co-worker—may be familiar: it was the basis for two films, "The Shop Around the Corner" and "In the Good Old Summertime." The show itself is less well known. Even its star, Judy Kuhn, who, as those who saw Rainbow & Stars' recent Rodgers and Hart revue can attest, is a superb interpreter of vintage show tunes, did not know it. "I'm surprised that I didn't," she says, "because when I tell theatre people that I'm in it, they all say, 'Oh, that's my favorite show.' So I guess it was overdue for reviving."

SHE
LOVES
ME

MARK GAGNON

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Playland—A two-character play by Athol Fugard that premièred last summer at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg. Frankie R. Faison and Kevin Spacey make up the cast. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

She Loves Me—A revival of the 1963 musical by Joe Masteroff, Jerry Bock, and Sheldon Harnick. The cast features Jonathan Freeman, Boyd Gaines, Brad Kane, Judy Kuhn, Sally Mayes, Howard McGillin, Lee Wilkof, and Louis Zorich. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Ten Below—A play by Shem Bitterman, with Kevin Conway and Anthony Edwards. In previews. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Totie—A musical based on the life of the comedienne Totie Fields. Book by Bobby Pearce and Nancy Timpanaro and score and lyrics by Robert Bendorff. In previews. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches—The first half of Tony Kushner's epic work. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Back to Bacharach and David—A fizzy, perfectly pitched new musical revue devoted to the songs Burt Bacharach and Hal David wrote in their prime. The singers are Melinda Gilb, Steve Gunderson, Sue Mosher, and Lillias White. Kathy Najimy directed. (Club 53, at the New York Hilton, Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. 261-5853.)

Blood Brothers—A glum non-musical musical, imported from Britain, about twin boys who are separated at birth. (Their mother, a cleaning woman, gives one of them to her employer.) The boys become friends, love the same girl, and die violent deaths. Willy Russell, whose credentials are good, wrote book, music, and lyrics, to no avail. With Con O'Neill, Stephanie Lawrence, Jan Graveson, and Mark Michael Hutchinson. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/10/93.) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Breaks—A play by Deb Margolin and Rae C. Wright. (Interart Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 246-1050. Closes June 7.)

Buya Africa—A musical with Thuli Dumakude. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Christina Alberta's Father—A new musical by Polly Penn, adapted from the novel by H. G. Wells. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Closes May 30.)

Ensemble Studio Theatre—The 1993 marathon of one-acts continues with "Fore," by Frank D. Gilroy, starring M. Emmett Walsh; "Ring of Men," by Adam Oliensis, featuring Corey Parker; "A Farewell to Mum," by Julie McKee; and "Tunnel of Love," by Jacquelyn Reingold. Through May 30. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. The marathon continues until June 13.)

Fool Moon—Bill Irwin and David Shiner are the inspired clowns in a show that is perfection itself. The only sound you'll hear is the merry music of the Red Clay Ramblers and the abundant laughter of the audience. (3/8/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Forbidden Broadway 1993—Once again, a galaxy of parodies that sharpen into satire. This edition is as witty as most of its predecessors. Among the newer shows under consideration are "Guys and Dolls" and "Falsettos," and the holdovers include "Les Misérables" and "The Phantom of the Opera." Gerard Alessandrini, as if you had to be told, is the clever writer and director, and Susanne Blakeslee, Dorothy Kiara, Brad Oscar, and Craig Wells are the splendid performers, doing a large assortment of roles. (1/25/93) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

The Goodbye Girl—Bernadette Peters and Martin Short, two brilliant, funny stars, transform this otherwise indifferent musical adaptation of Neil Simon's movie into a sporadically festive evening. The dances by Graciela Daniele are more than helpful, as is the comic support by John Christopher Jones. Score by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by David Zippel. Michael Kidd directed. (3/15/93) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Jeffrey—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS; with John Michael Higgins. It is less a fleshed-out play than a series of Scenes from Gay Life, but Mr. Rudnick can quip with the best of them. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—A touching musical, based on the novel by Manuel Puig, with a distinguished book by Terrence McNally, a star performance by Brent Carver, as the heroic homosexual window dresser, and another by the redoubtable Chita Rivera in the title role. Under Harold Prince's masterly direction, the harshness of the story is never elided, yet the action is always lively and often witty and tender. Since the music is deafening, many of the songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb must be taken on faith, but those which can be heard are good. Nothing but praise for the setting by Jerome Sirlin and the costumes by Florence Klotz. With Anthony Crivello, as Mr. Carver's cellmate, and Merle Louise and Kirsti Carnahan. (5/24/93) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

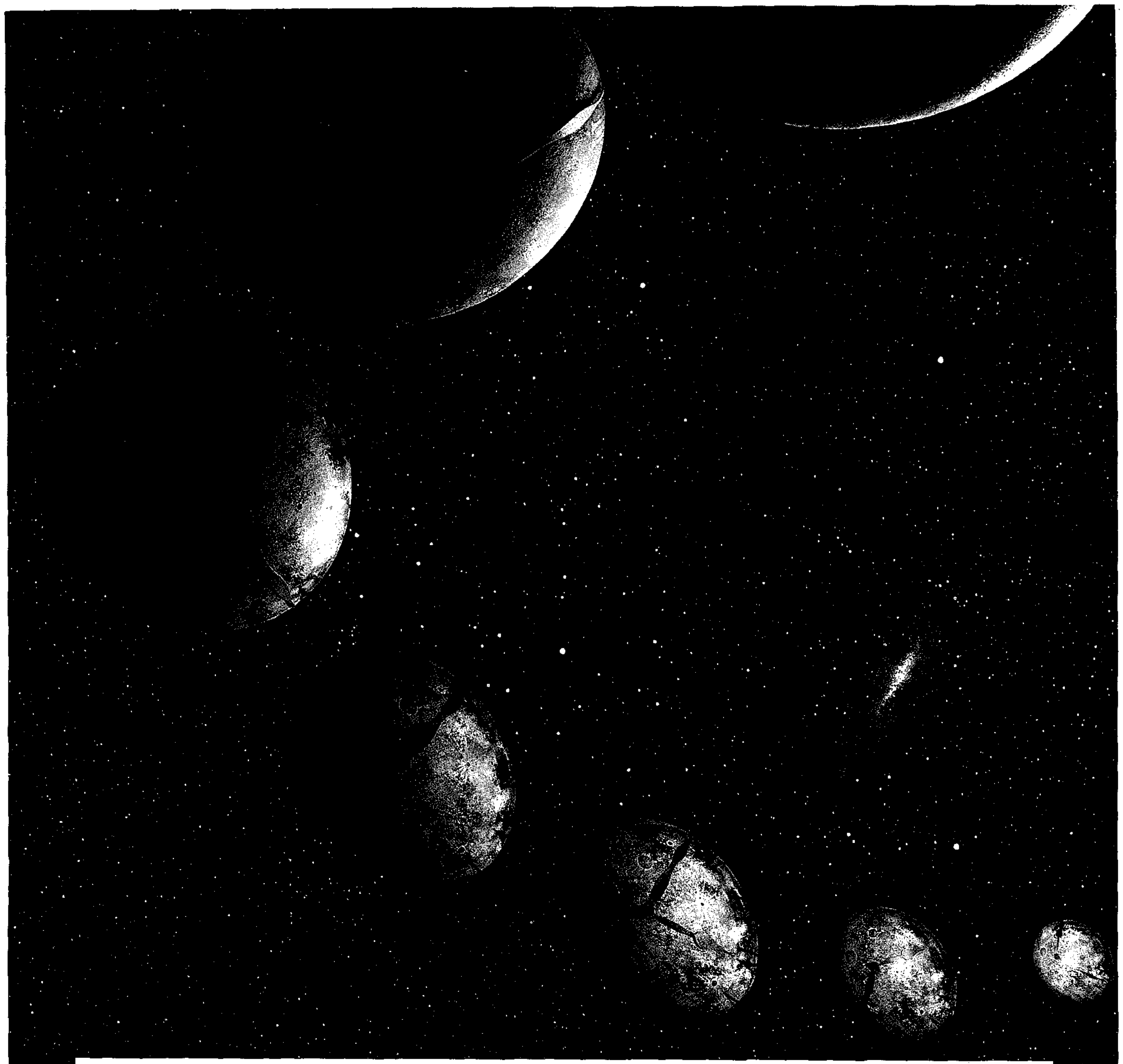
Later Life—In A. R. Gurney's new play, a man and woman who haven't seen each other in thirty years meet up again. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Linda—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company goes West in this farcical melodrama about gays and the religious right. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Lypsinka! A Day in the Life—John Epperson—a nonpareil if ever there was one—brings his happiness cocktail to Off Broadway. Epperson has come a long way from his late-night club origins: like Cyd Charisse, one of his M-G-M-era idols, he's a long-legged pro. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Marisol—A play by José Rivera, with Cordelia Gonzalez and Danitra Vance. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Oleanna—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other topics in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. The play's skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Treat Williams and Mary McCann make up the



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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

cast. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

On a Clear Day You Can See Forever—A revival of the 1965 Alan Jay Lerner–Burton Lane musical. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes May 29.)

Playboy of the West Indies—Mustapha Matura transplants John Millington Synge's "Playboy" from Ireland to Trinidad with total success. That it survives the move so well is due, in part, to Mr. Matura's poetic fluency in wielding the local patois, and, in part, to the distinguished cast, under the direction of Gerald Gutierrez. As the Playboy himself, Victor Love gives a first-rate performance in a first-rate role. He receives strong support from Michele Shay, Lorraine Toussaint, Antonio Fargas, and Arthur French. (5/24/93) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Race—A one-man show by Paul Mooney, a standup comic and writer known for his work with Richard Pryor. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Shakespeare for My Father—A marvellous one-woman show, in which Lynn Redgrave reviews her own life in a search for her unloving father, Michael Redgrave. She combines anecdotes, brilliant thumbnail impersonations of British actors, and wry reminiscence with passages from Shakespeare, which she delivers with eloquence and emotion. This essentially serious evening is often as amusing as it is sad. (5/10/93) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Estabrook, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me—Michael York (English), Stephen Rea (Irish), and Chuck Cooper (American) portray hostages in Beirut in Frank McGuinness's moving and humorous play. Robin Lefèvre directed. David Dukes replaces Mr. Rea starting June 1. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Three Hotels—This new play by Jon Robin Baitz is no more than a technical exercise, but what players! Debra Monk and Ron Rifkin are superb as husband and wife; the versatile Joe Mantello directed. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Time on Fire—This wry, tough, and instructive one-man show by writer-performer Evan Handler is about his successful battle with leukemia. Unfortunately, his acting isn't up to his script; he's generally so matter-of-fact that one almost never feels any real connection to what he's going through. He is a great mimic, though, and his observations on the medical profession are scathing. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. Closes May 30.)

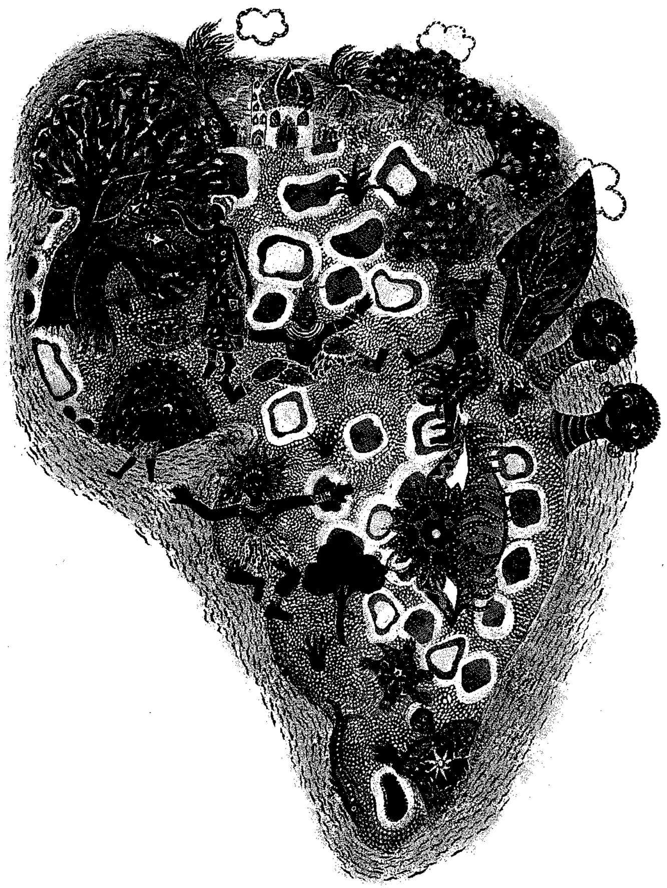
The Who's Tommy—Pete Townshend's music—however muted for Broadway—has an indubitable thrill, but director Des McAnuff's production is caught on the horns of a theatrical dilemma that no amount of slick, exhausting spectacle can resolve. The hero, that deaf, dumb, and blind kid, is spectacularly passive, and thus unreachable, unknowable, and essentially undramatic. (5/3/93) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Wild Men!—Subtitled "A Musical . . . Sort Of," this comedy plays on the edges of something with substance, yet finally possesses little of its own. Set in "the North Woods" on a "Wild Man Weekend," the show makes outrageous mockery of the men's movement, its primal yearnings, and its guru, Robert Bly. Though not penetrating, the evening benefits from the vitality of everyone onstage. "Cheers" survivor George Wendt stars, along with a host of Chicago's Second City alums. The excellent percussion was arranged by Judy Nielsen, founder of the Women's Action Coalition Drum Corps, in Chicago. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Wrong Turn at Lungfish—The play owes more to day-in, day-out television than it does to the theatre. With Calista Flockhart, Michael E. Knight, Kathleen Marshall, and Fritz Weaver. (3/8/93) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

LONG RUNS

beau jest: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **blue man group/tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **crazy for you:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **falsettos:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **the fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **forever plaid:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **guys and dolls:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **jelly's last jam:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **les misérables:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **miss saigon:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **the night larry kramer kissed me:** Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038. . . . **nunsense:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **perfect crime:** Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **the phantom of the opera:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **tony n' tina's wedding:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **the will rogers follies:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.



DanceAfrica festival at BAM.

ANNOUCHKA GALOUCHKO

DANCE

Tap Classic

In first-class tap dancing, the sound produced by the dancer's taps is as distinctive as handwriting. Short, dry tapping—without reverberation or scraping of any kind—constitutes the signature of Paul Draper. The New York dancer, now eighty-three, has been out of the spotlight for quite a while, but this year he will be one of the co-recipients (with Cholly Atkins) of the Flo-Bert Award at the annual gala sponsored by the New York Committee to Celebrate National Tap Dance Day (May 30, Haft Auditorium of the Fashion Institute of Technology; for information, call 597-4613)—the first white tapper to be so honored.

As one studies the roster of performers for that event—Harold Nicholas and Peg Leg Bates will act as the m.c.s—one is reminded of how distinctive Mr. Draper is in the field as a whole. He made his name tapping not to jazz but to classical music. He emphasized a pulled-up body, with balletic port de bras, rather than the floating, dangling look of many jazz-tap stars. And his foot came straight down to strike the floor at what he calls "an acute angle," rather than with the sideways shuffle favored by some tap dancers. "I never started anything," he said recently, "and I don't belong to a lineage. I danced to classical music and made it entertaining."

New York City Ballet—The Balanchine Celebration. May 26 and May 28 at 8, and May 30 at 1: "A Midsummer Night's Dream.". . . ¶ May 27 at 8: "Bugaku," "Tarantella," "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Gounod Symphony.". . . ¶ May 29 at 2: "Harlequinade" and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet.". . . ¶ May 29 at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "Bugaku," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet.". . . ¶ May 30 at 7: "Divertimento No. 15," "Agon," and "Scotch Symphony.". . . ¶ June 1 at 8: The 1967 "Valse-Fantaisie," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo," "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Harlequinade." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 27.)

American Ballet Theatre—May 26 at 2 and 8 and May 27 at 8: "Swan Lake.". . . ¶ May 28 and May 31-June 1, all at 8, and May 29 at 2 and 8: "Manon" (company première). (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 12.)

Jazz Tap Ensemble—Final performances of an engagement by a nine-member group from Los Angeles. With guest artists Jimmy Slyde (May 26-27), Harold Nicholas (May 29 evening), and Savion Glover (May 30 evening). (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 26-28 at 8 and May 29-30 at 2 and 8.)

DanceAfrica—The sixteenth annual gathering of African-American dance companies, this year including more than a hundred performers. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette St. 1-718 636-4100. May 28 at 8; May 29 at 2 and 8; and May 30 at 3.)

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NIGHT LIFE

Out of the Eighties

LESS than a decade ago, Cyndi Lauper and Madonna were the two most dazzling SWFs of the dawning music-video age. But while Madonna went on to give new meaning to the phrase "world domination," Ms. Lauper—well, what *did* happen to Ms. Lauper? The singer's heady 1984 début album, "She's So Unusual," spawned four hit singles and earned her *Rolling Stone's* Best New Artist and *Ms.'s* Woman of the Year awards. But her next two releases, "True Colors" (1986) and "A Night to Remember" (1989), generated progressively diminishing returns. Worse, her image as a kooky but independent woman was eclipsed by poor career management and an unfortunate decision to hitch her star to the world of professional wrestling.

In the past couple of years, Ms. Lauper has quietly regrouped. She got married, to the actor David Thornton; she acted in the upcoming film "Life with Mikey," with Michael J. Fox; and she immersed herself in making a new album, "Hat Full of Stars." Ms. Lauper's manager, Brian Avnet, says the singer was determined to exercise total control over the project, which took two and a half years to complete. She co-produced the album and co-wrote all the songs with artists like Mary-Chapin Carpenter and Nicky Holland. As in the past, she fearlessly traverses a range of styles, but the big departure here is an infusion of crisp, up-to-the-minute dance and hip-hop grooves. Ms. Lauper will preview this strong and confident new work at Irving Plaza on May 26. And this time, Mr. Avnet promises, "you're not going to see a lot of wrestlers around her."

DOUG ALLEN

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JEFF HARNAR** begins work in the Oak Room on May 25. He'll be presenting his new show, "Dancing in the Dark—Vincente Minnelli's Hollywood." Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent ham in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and John Parker, Fridays to the George Stubbs trio and the Freddy Francis trio (who also appear on Saturdays with Mabel Godwin), and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. On May 27, **MILT HINTON** hosts a tribute to **MABEL GODWIN,** who is about to retire after thirty-three years of performing.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **CHARLES BUSCH** is here through May 30.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. **NANCY WILSON** performs through May 31. Much like her idol and mentor, the late Dinah Washington, Ms. Wilson has successfully walked the fine line between R. & B. and jazz. Her husky, conversational vocals have graced a wide range of material, from Ellington to Manilow. In a live performance, Wilson is disarming and very sexy. When she glides into a torch song, the room's temperature starts to rise. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great black loft that's jammed with row after row of tables—it looks a little like the site of a standardized test. **DARLENE LOVE** is here on May 26 and May 28. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Though not posh, the room is both comfortable and classy, and the presence of the genteel and amiable **BOBBY SHORT,** who'll be presiding at the piano till the end of June, helps confirm the impression that all's well with the world. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, singer-and-pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** offers a nightly mix of jazz, show tunes, and pop classics, with a few original numbers thrown in for good measure.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—It's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. The **SCOTT HAMILTON** quintet holds forth through May 30. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—This two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. Physically, the place is sagging a bit, but it has an odd, dingy charm. **CYNDI LAUPER** is here on May 26. For concert information, call 249-8870.

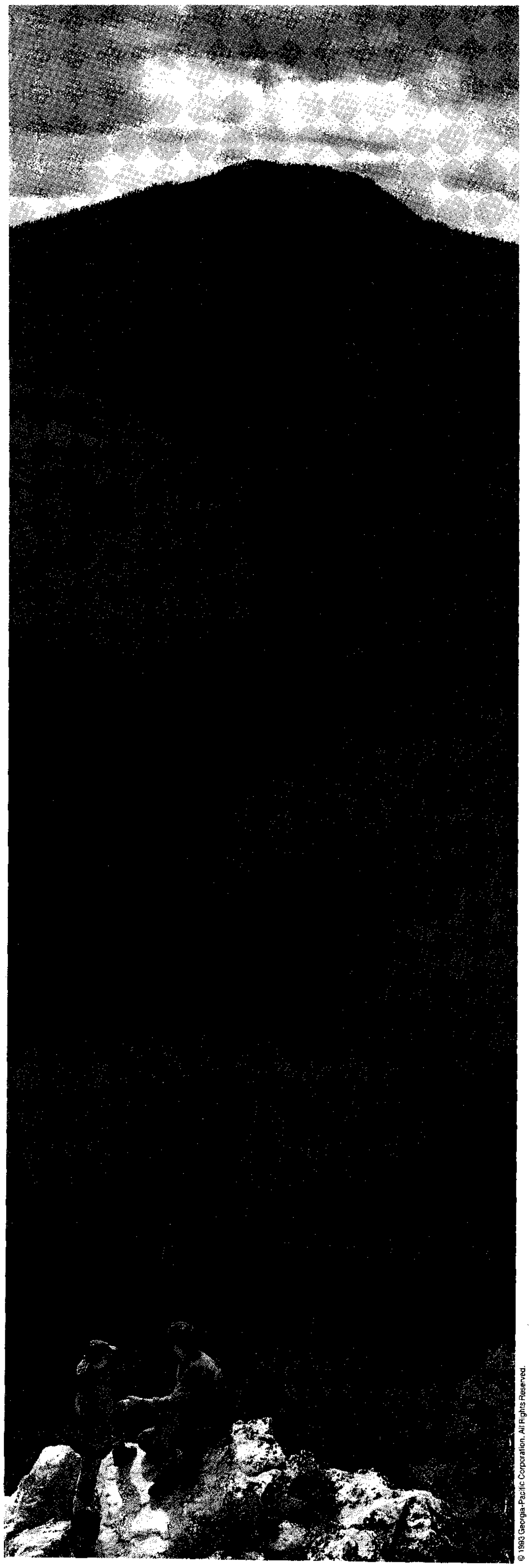
KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, bangers and mash, and a piano. While music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. Pianist **VALERIE CAPERS** and bassist John Robinson play May 26-29.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for freethinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. May 28 belongs to **GIL SCOTT-HERON.**

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. In recent years, CB's has become something of an empire; the club is now flanked by a pizzeria/boutique on one side and a bar/performance space on the other—all your shopping needs taken care of in one convenient location.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—It's named for its Texas décor, but lately a more apt name would be the Second Chance, since so many lost, forgotten, or faded rockers turn up here. But the club's busy schedule includes a variety of newer acts, too. Dining.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A plain blue back room



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Stephen A. Delfs

Steve Delfs
Forester

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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drumhead, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet, to name a few. The beer of choice here is Rolling Rock—by a landslide—and the crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes—has more of a country-club feel. **Nancy Marano** and **Eddie Monteiro** are on hand through May 29. Starting on June 1, Johnny Crawford and His 1928 Jazz Orchestra show up. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There, you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here, intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, have to compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. **Billy Stritch** is in the midst of an engagement. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small red-gold-and-green cabaret. On May 26, the club launches a new venture whereby students from the Manhattan School of Music perform right next door to the big concert hall where they all aspire to perform. The opening program will spotlight the brother-and-sister piano duo of Maria Lourdes and Luis Pérez-Molina, from Barcelona, playing music by Stravinsky, Dvořák, and Montsalvatge. Sharing the program will be soprano Peggy Kriha and tenor Matthew Chellis (assisted by pianist Warren Helms), offering songs and duets by Gershwin, Bernstein, and others. Dining.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. **Linton Kwesi Johnson,** the reggae chanter and dub poet, is here on June 1, with **John Trudell.** L.K.J. dresses like a country preacher and delivers sermons on race relations, poverty, and global politics. Many of his rhymes are in Jamaican patois, so it's easy to lose the thread of the narrative, but even if you do, his band, which hops from one reggae style to the next, will keep your feet moving. Trudell is an eloquent Santee Sioux "spoken word" performer, whose compositions describe Native American life and religion and the oppression of tribal culture. Some of his pieces are accompanied by traditional drumming and singing while others are backed up by rock instruments. Closed Sundays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This brown-toned ski chalet of a club is a fine place to study jazz-group dynamics. **Mc Coy Tyner, Avery Sharpe,** and **Aaron Scott** are in action through May 30. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **Miles Evans** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Time Café, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Hidden inside this sleek and trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. Upstairs is a sumptuous Moroccan bar and lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabian-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a comfortable spot to take in a show. **Richard Hell** performs on May 26. The **Mingus Big Band** packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, located near what was once called Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. The pillared, loftlike room is decorated in a hodgepodge, vaguely Bourbon Street manner, and sight lines are above average. May 28: **Toots & the Maytals** and **the Itals.**

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town which still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through May 30: **Don Pullen & the African-Brazilian Connection.** Starting on June 1: the **Roy Haynes** quartet. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

RIGHT now, the biggest "Huh?" in town has got to be Kaptain Banana (101 Greene Street). Enter what used to be the cavernous Greene Street Bar, smack simultaneously into its new red-devil décor and the good Kaptain himself—a Gallic Thurston Howell III whose real name is Jean-Marie and whose English vocabulary doesn't go much beyond universally recognized expressions of passion—and you're going to ask "What the hell is this?"

Don't let the full menu fool you. This is not about dinner. Don't let Banana, who seems to know everyone in the room, intimidate you. He's had a guesthouse on St. Bart's for years, and used to run Club Alcazar in Paris. The latter is the tip-off. As soon as the houselights go down, eight chorus boys and girls, each weighing not much more than Audrey Hepburn did in "Funny Face," blast onto the stage lip-synching a welcome in their best "Be Our Guest" manner. Meantime, Jean-Marie is handing out electrical-taped Coke cans full of shells for registering applause. But before you can get the knack of the shake, out bound three bejewelled, unbothered, and hardly bewildered drag queens the like of which Dame Edna hasn't split a crumpet with in years. This is gender-bending more akin to Uncle Miltie than to the divine Lypsinka. Imagine the innocent innuendo and lavish aimlessness of a bus-and-truck Folies-Bergère with half the attitude and even less cigarette smoke. You may find it worth shaking your can for.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Cirque du Soleil—This intimate one-ring circus from Montreal is presenting a new show, "Saltimbanco," through June 6. (The blue-and-yellow tent at Battery Park City. For information about show times and tickets, call 809-6969.)

"The Invisible Circus"—Victoria Chaplin and Jean Baptiste Thiérrée, creators of "Le Cirque Imaginaire," return with a new show. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 3.)

Mac Wellman—Presenting a piece called "The Land of Fog and Whistles." (Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, Park Ave. at 42nd St. May 26 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

P.S. 122—May 27-30 at 7:30: Kurt Fulton and Iris Rose in "Gender Tennis." . . ¶ May 27-30 at 9: Bill Young and Dancers. Through June 6. . . . ¶ Fridays and Saturdays at midnight: "Hot Keys," Jeff Weiss's downtown soap opera. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

Shapes of Things

JOEL SHAPIRO is commanding a much larger scale than before, and is slapping his figures together, or breaking them up, with terrific abandon. One figure seems to be sliding into first base, or maybe performing an outfielder's stunt, while also suggesting a tree being blown to the ground in a hurricane. Even as he is taking his known forms to new extremes, Shapiro is moving in new directions as well. A number of tubular limbed sculptures are linked in spirit to the figures but are starker, more absurdist, perhaps because they look like denuded trees from a set for "Waiting for Godot." In yet another distinct body of work, he has revised his earlier ball motif, here composed of cast-bronze spheres roughly the size of bowling balls, joined by rods. They suggest molecular models as well as private parts, and recall the impacted potency of his Lilliputian works from the seventies. Shapiro has managed at once to galvanize all the elements in his repertoire while moving headlong onto new turf. This two-gallery exhibition (Pace Uptown, 32 East 57th Street, and Pace Downtown, 142 Greene Street) hums with energy.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Abstract Expressionism: Works on Paper, Selections from the Collection" features more than sixty drawings and paintings, by de Kooning, Motherwell, Rothko, and many others. . . . ¶ "Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection." Through June 20. . . . ¶ "The Waking Dream: Photography's First Century" showcases rare prints from 1839 to 1939. Through July 4. . . . ¶ "Drawings from the J. Paul Getty Museum." More than a hundred works by Bronzino, Raphael, Titian, and many others, with special emphasis on the Italian Renaissance. . . . ¶ The New Costume Institute's first show, "Infra-Apparel," puts into perspective the phenomenon—not at all confined to the present day—of underwear worn as outerwear. . . . ¶ "Persian Tiles" presents more than fifty examples from the museum's collection, most of them from the mid-thirteenth century. . . . ¶ "The Art of Pre-Columbian Gold: The Jan Mitchell Collection." (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—Dadaist photomontages by John Heartfield and photographs by Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Through July 6. . . . ¶ Drypoints by Braque and Picasso, Pop art that incorporates commercial signs, and computer-assisted photolithographs are among the more than ninety works in "Reading Prints," an installation tracing the role of language in art. Through July 6. . . . ¶ "Cinderella," an installation, both whimsical and poignant, of seventeen photographs, in which the characters are William Wegman's sad-faced weimaraners. Through July 6. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Picasso and the Age of Iron," an installation of some of this century's most engaging sculpture. The show includes work by Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Julio González, and David Smith. Through June 13. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

Elizabeth Catlett at Kelly gallery.

EILEEN TRAVELL

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—Seventy-five paintings, watercolors, drawings, and prints by Paul Klee (1879-1940), dating from 1903 to 1939 and all from the museum's permanent collection. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—After all the pans and the pedantry and pretension, the 1993 Biennial is probably still worth seeing, if only for works by Nan Goldin, Pepón Osorio, Nancy Spero, and other indubitable highlights. Through June 13. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Pieces of String Too Short to Save," an installation by Donald Lipski, made of found objects—gloves, candles, books, etc. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"The Hall of Human Biology and Evolution," a new permanent exhibition. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Dandies and Decadence: British Writers at the Turn of the Century". . . . ¶ "Femininity, Fashion, and Feminism" is an exploration of coded messages implicit in apparel. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:45.)

QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART, Flushing Meadow Park—"Barbara Ess: Photography, Installation, and Books: 1978-91." A retrospective of work by an artist whose mediums include audiocassettes, handmade books, and, above all, pinhole-camera photography. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

ELIZABETH CATLETT—If the late Romare Bearden is the man who brought black American experience to the mainstream, then Elizabeth Catlett, with her strong, sensual sculp-

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ART–Cont'd

tures in polished wood and stone, is the woman who for some time has been doing the same and getting much less credit for it. At seventy-four, she is in complete command of her talents. Her female heads and figures follow in the lyrical American figurative tradition of Nadelman and Lachaise, but also reveal African and Mesoamerican roots. Through June 8. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

Chuck Close—The gallery has produced twenty copies of an extraordinary silk rug by Chuck Close, which is based on his painting of Lucas Samaras. It is finely knotted, with lots of intense colors and a high degree of detail. The source work is the most maniacal of Close's portraits, and it therefore makes sense that the artist chose it to be walked upon—somehow the image can withstand it. Through June 3. (A/D, 560 Broadway.)

Sylvie Fleury—It is fitting after all the consumerist art of the eighties that an artist should come along to point out the psychic hazards of shopping. The main gallery here is empty, except for a tiny dressing room—a mirror surrounded by a pink velour curtain—in each corner. A smaller gallery is where the goods are: generic propped boards, like John McCracken sculptures, covered in turquoise fake fur, a display of empty makeup packages, and monitors playing fitness videos by female celebrities. Fleury is so good at riding a line between cynicism and style that her work is a pleasure to take in—or to be taken in by. Through June 5. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Günther Förg—A pleasant show of paintings of roughly drawn black and gray rectangles and of multicolored grids. The paintings work fine on their own; the artist's own maquette drawings of them are simply redundant. Through May 29. (Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St.)

Peter Shelton—A grandly silly show of accomplished cast-bronze sculptures with wiry, curled pipes dribbling water over their surfaces. The most complicated sculpture consists of a bed suspended from the ceiling with an inverted model of Chartres Cathedral hanging from it, water dripping from its spires. Other, simpler ones are positively surreal: water dribbling over a chair, for example, or on a dog's paws. There must have been a point to this, but the artist seems to have lost it. Through May 29. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

"Coming to Power"—A show of erotic art by women that brings together the seventies generation and younger artists. The works include Lynda Benglis's daring silver double-headed dildos, Nancy Spero's joyous painting of women dancing with phalluses, and Nancy Grossman's fiercely fetishistic leather heads. A number of the younger women deal directly with lesbian material, and to this end Nicole Eisenman's notebooks filled with drawings of sexual fantasies are as entertaining as they are impressive. Through June 12. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St.)

Short List—**NICOLAS AFRICANO:** Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. Through June 19.... **SIAH ARMAJANI:** Protetch, 560 Broadway. Through June 12.... **JOHN BEERMAN:** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. Through June 5.... **HOWARD BEN TRÉ:** Cowles, 420 West Broadway. Through June 12.... **MARK DI SUVERO:** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. Through June 12.... **CONSTANCE DODGE:** Eno, 594 Broadway. Through May 27.... **SUZAN ETKIN:** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. Through May 29.... **LAWRENCE FANE:** Bace, 2 Bond St. Through May 29.... **KATHARINA FRITSCH:** Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. Through June 22.... **MICHAEL GOLDBERG:** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway. Through June 26.... **FELIX GONZÁLEZ-TORRES:** Rosen, 130 Prince St. Through May 29.... **Y. Z. KAMI:** Toll, 146 Greene St. Through June 12.... **WALT KELLY:** F.D.R., 670 Broadway. Through June 30.... **GUILLERMO KUITCA:** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. Through June 12.... **VINCENT LONGO:** Condeso-Lawler, 524 Broadway. Through June 5.... **CARLO MARIA MARIANI:** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 420 West Broadway. Through May 28.... **WILL MENTOR:** Rubenstein-Diacono, 130 Prince St. Through June 25.... **REE MORTON:** Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. Through June 5.... **FRANK OWEN:** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through July 10.... **RICHARD PETTIBONE:** Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through June 5.... **ODILON REDON:** The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Through May 28.... **JOEL SHAPIRO:** Pace, 142 Greene St. Through June 26.... **TONY SMITH:** Cooper, 155 Wooster St. Through May 29.... **HAIM STEINBACH:** Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway. Through June 26.... **JAMES WELLING** and **MICHAEL JENKINS:** Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through May 29.... **THOMAS WOODRUFF:** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway. Through May 29.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Alberto Giacometti—Most of the work in this spectacular show is from the fifties and sixties, the artist's mature phase. Through June 19. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Anselm Kiefer—The enormous pile of ruined paintings that dominates this monumental and puzzling installation is titled "Twenty Years of Loneliness." Through June 19. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

Robert Andrew Parker—Nearly two hundred etchings from 1952 to 1992, including portraits of jazz musicians, self-portraits, landscapes, and depictions of animals. Through June 23. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

I.B.M. Gallery of Science and Art—"Master European Paintings from the National Gallery of Ireland." Through June 26.... ¶ "Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz, Two Lives." Through June 26. (590 Madison Ave., at 56th St.)

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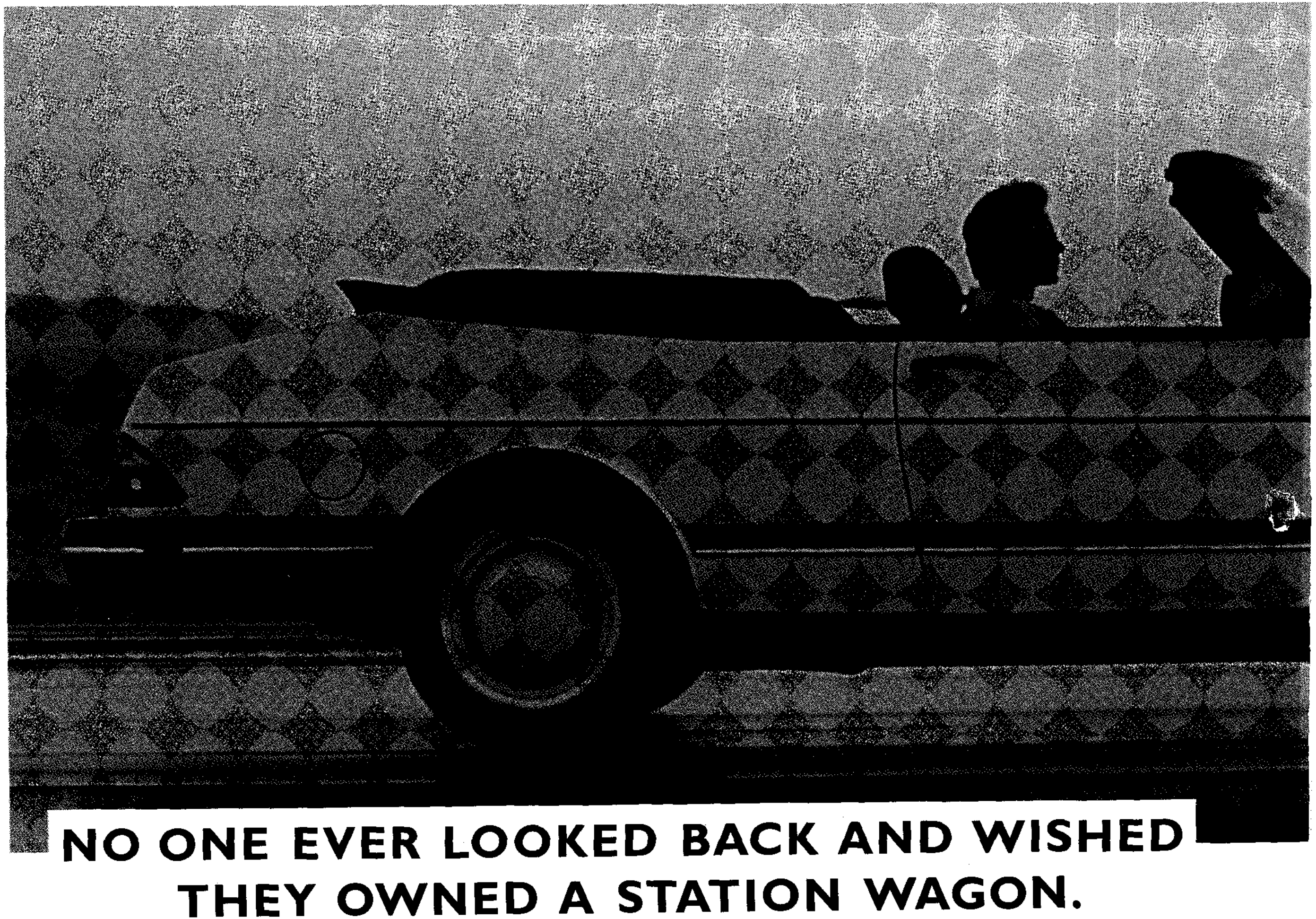
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THEY OWNED A STATION WAGON.

SHORT LIST—**MAGDALENA ABAKANOWICZ:** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Through June 5. . . . **GIFFORD BEAL:** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 18. . . . **ELIZABETH BUTTERWORTH:** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Through June 12. . . . **ALEXANDER CALDER:** O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 5. . . . **MARY FRANK:** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 4. . . . **CHILDE HASSAM:** Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. Through June 26. . . . **ADDIE HERDER:** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. Through June 4. . . . **CHARLES HOWARD:** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. Through June 18. . . . **DAVID LIGARE:** Stiebel Modern, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 5. . . . **SEYMOUR LIPTON:** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 25. . . . **BRICE MARDEN:** Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Through June 26. . . . **DAN MC CLEARY:** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 12. . . . **SANTE MONACHESI:** Marisa Del Re, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 8. . . . **JAN MÜLLER** and **BOB THOMPSON:** Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St. Through May 29. . . . **DENNIS OPPENHEIM:** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. Through June 12. . . . **ALFONSO OSSORIO:** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through June 26. . . . **BILL PANGBURN:** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. Through May 29. . . . **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG:** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. Through June 4. . . . **ARNALDO ROCHE:** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 12. . . . **JOEL SHAPIRO:** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 18. . . . **BURTON SILVERMAN:** Keiffer, 28 E. 72 St. Through June 5. . . . **RICHARD SMITH:** Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. Through June 25. . . . **XUL SOLAR:** Adler, 41 E. 57th St. Through June 30. . . . **PAVEL TCHELITCHEW:** Rosenfeld, 50 W. 57th St. Through May 29. . . . **JOYCE TREIMAN:** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. Through May 28. . . . **JOHN H. TWACHTMAN:** Spanierman, 50 E. 78th St. Through July 2. . . . **NOT VITAL:** Baron-Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. Through June 30.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Beat Heart

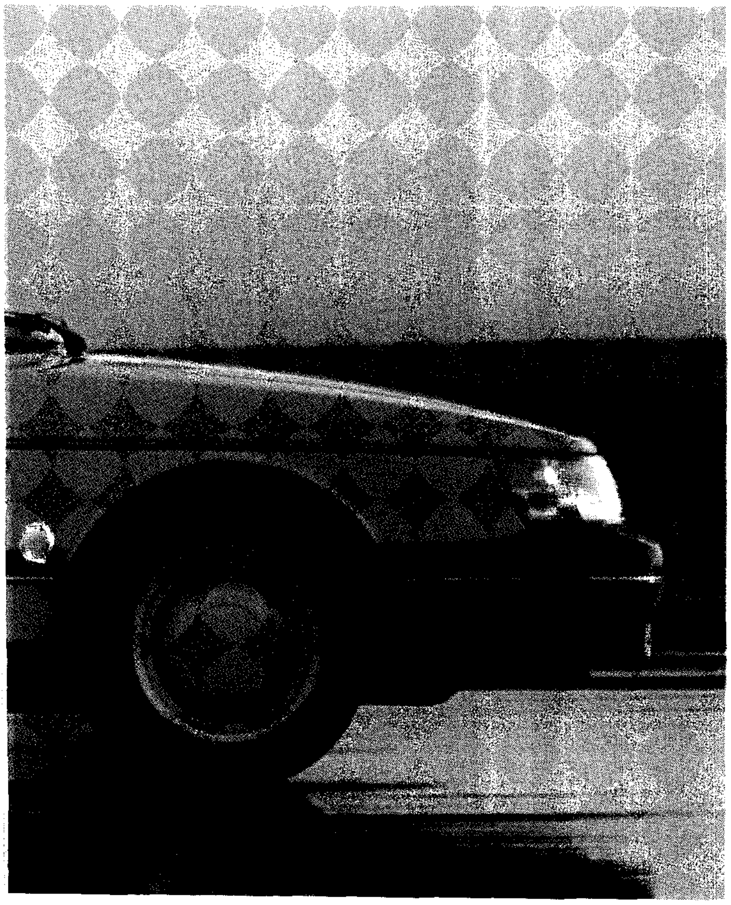
IS there any photographer who did more to define America in the fifties—with its melancholy and its homely existentialism—than Robert Frank? And is there any photographer who did more to inspire the next generation of photography buffs? One of Frank's young fans was Edwynn Houk, who is part owner of the Houk Friedman Gallery (851 Madison Avenue, at 70th Street), which is showing, through June 26, a large and fine exhibition of Frank's work from 1948 (the year after the Swiss-born photographer came to the United States) to 1960. It's a broad view, including some pictures done in Peru, Paris, and London, but the majority of the photographs are American, with rich examples of Frank's classic subjects. For instance, the road: there's a 1956 shot that was taken after a car accident on Route 66 in Arizona, showing a woman and three men huddled together near several bodies covered with blankets, and its bleakness sends shivers through you.

Frank is often praised for his soulful realism, but he was also a witty and lyrical documenter of the new illusions of the fifties. In a shot taken at a TV studio in Hollywood, the actor Peter Lorre, holding a gun and with a wild look in his eyes, stands near an actress in a wedding dress; her face is blocked by the shoe of a cameraman perched on a boom—a foot-in-the-mouth picture. (This photograph and others are not on display, but the gallery staff will show them to interested visitors.)

ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE—Black-and-white Polaroids taken between 1971 and 1975. Through June 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

SHORT LIST—**JESSIE TARBOX BEALS:** Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. Through June 19. . . . **JAMES CASEBERE:** Klein, 594 Broadway. Through May 29. . . . **WILLIAM CLIFT:** Equitable Gallery, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. Through June 12. . . . **ALEXANDRA EDWARDS** and **MICHAEL HOWELLS:** Danziger, 415 West Broadway. Through May 29. . . . **ARTHUR ELGORT:** Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. Through July 3. . . . **NAN GOLDIN** and **JOSEF KOUDELKA:** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through June 12. . . . **CHRISTOPHER JAMES:** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through July 22. . . . **DAVID LEVINTHAL** and **EDWARD CURTIS:** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Through June 30. . . . **RICHARD MISRACH:** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through June 5. . . . **ANDREA MODICA:** Saul, 560 Broadway. Through July 2. . . . **DOROTHY NORMAN:** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.) Through June 27. . . . **ONOFRIO PACCIONE:** Stendal, 622 Broadway. Through June 20. . . . **RICHARD PRINCE:** Gladstone, 99 Greene St. Through June 12. . . . **ELAINE STURTEVANT:** Stux, 163 Mercer St. Through May 29.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Queens Museum.)



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MUSIC

Au Naturel

FOR the song-minded, a constant horror on Broadway is the strident amplification and the strident, strangulated singing that, paradoxically, goes with it. ("Paradoxically" in that the microphone, which was invented partly to make vocal projection easier, has in fact made it much harder: since actors no longer have to learn how to sing, most of them don't.) If we're lucky, natural sound will be rediscovered as a health fad, like natural foods. In the meantime, a pleasant stream of reminders has been filtering steadily into the record stores in the form of the Sony Broadway series—compact-disk reissues of the old Columbia show albums, some of them Broadway casts, some soundtracks, some produced just for records. The newest batch to hit the shelves includes "Show Boat," "South Pacific," "Oklahoma!," "The King and I," and "The Boys from Syracuse." Some of this stuff is classic, some tastelessly arranged, some inspired, some forgettable; but none of the albums is without its charms. Two nice touches: the original covers are reproduced in all their fifties and sixties datedness, which gives you the feeling of being in a used-record store or an attic; and in some cases the opportunity has been taken to include additional material (so in "West Side Story" you get more of the orchestral music and in "South Pacific" you get Martin and Pinza in some bits they didn't sing in the show itself).

Bang on a Can Festival at the Kitchen.

DAVID GOLDIN

OPERA

Opera Manhattan—Final performances of Gabriel Fauré's "Pénélope," in what appears to be its first staging in the United States. Performed in French, with English supertitles, in a reduced orchestration; conducted by Gabriel Guimarães. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. May 26 and May 28 at 8. For information about tickets, call 315-3161.)

Measured Breaths Theatre Company—Presenting an odd coupling: Emilio de' Cavalieri's "The Representation of Body and Soul" (a pioneering opera-oratorio from 1600) and Kurt Weill's "He Who Says Yes," both given in English, conducted by Roberto Pace (leading a six-piece orchestra) and staged by Robert Press. Expect the postmodern. (Musical Theatre Works, 440 Lafayette St. 334-8402. May 27-31 at 8.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—Stephen Rogers Radcliffe directs concert versions of three comic chamber operas: Douglas Moore's "Gallantry" (a musical soap opera), Menotti's "The Telephone" (in which phone calls persistently interrupt a suitor's attempts to propose marriage), and Hindemith's "There and Back" (or "Hin und Zurück," a fourteen-minute crab canon: it literally reverses its plot and its music halfway through, and ends where it began). Featuring soprano Jeanne Ommerle, mezzo-soprano Julia Parks, tenor Carl Halvorson, baritone Richard Holmes, and bass-baritone Robert Osborne. (Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. May 29 at 3. No tickets necessary. Raindate, May 30 at 3.)

"Tosca"—Anton Coppola directs a concert performance, with the Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra. (Woodlawn Cemetery, Jerome Ave. Gate at Bainbridge Ave, the Bronx. May 30 at 2. No tickets necessary.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts the première of Karel Husa's Violin Concerto (featuring the orchestra's concertmaster, Glenn Dicterow), Brahms' Symphony No. 3, and Ravel's "Boléro." (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. May 27 and May 29 at 8, and May 28 at 2.) . . . ¶ Mr. Masur conducts Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with soprano Benita Valente, mezzo-soprano Janis Taylor, tenor Michael Forest, and baritone Nathaniel Watson. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. May 31 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Manhattan Philharmonic—John Rutter directs his own compositions; with Dallas's Turtle Creek Chorale. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 29 at 8, with a pre-concert recital by the Chorale at 7.)

RECITALS

Bang on a Can Festival—The conclusion of this year's exploration of the latest, the hippest, and the most revered of the retro. May 26-28 at 7: "The Child God," a shadow-puppet opera by Bun-Ching Lam; featuring the Yueh Lung Shadow Theatre. . . . ¶ May 26 at 8:15: "ITSOFOMO (In the Shadow of Forward Motion)," a performance work by Ben Neill and the late David Wojnarowicz. . . . ¶ May 27 at 8:15: Works by John Cage, Frances White, Brandon Ross, and Mary Wright. . . . ¶ May 28 at 8:15: The Daniel Lentz group. . . . ¶ May 29 at 7: Carl Stone, at the Macintosh computer. . . . ¶ May 29 at 9:15: An amalgam of electric-guitar playing and poetry reading. . . . ¶ May 30, from 3 until midnight: A marathon concert of twenty-four works by twenty-two composers. Among the more classic works on the overwhelmingly contemporary program are Ives' String Quartets No. 1 and No. 2, Morton Feldman's "Piece" and "Vertical Thoughts 2," and Elliott Carter's Duo. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793.)

Christopher Creaghan—Organist, performing works by Sweelinck, DeGrigny, Bach (his B-Minor Prelude and Fugue and C-Major Trio Sonata), Messiaen ("Dieu parmi nous"), McNeil Robinson, Widor, and Vierne. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. May 26 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Bargemusic—Presenting minor-key string quartets by Mozart (in D Minor, K. 421), Mendelssohn (in E Minor, Op. 44, No. 2), and Smetana ("From My Life"). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. May 27 at 7:30 and May 30 at 4.)

Terry Eder—Pianist, performing Beethoven's Sonata in E Minor (Op. 90), Chopin's F-Minor Fantasie, Bartók's "Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs," Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin," and three rags by William Bolcom. (Marymount Manhattan College, 221 E. 71st St. May 27 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New Renaissance Chamber Artists—Presenting "Start from Scratch," a new music-theatre work by David Greenspan. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 242-4770. May 28-30 at 8.)

Eric Grossman and Ilan Rechtman—The violinist and the pianist conclude their traversal of Beethoven's violin sonatas by playing No. 9 (the "Kreutzer") and No. 10. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. May 31 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

VineyardMusicke—The period-instrument ensemble offers a selection of music from the personal library of Thomas Jefferson, a violinist better known for other pursuits. "Do not neglect your music," Jefferson once advised, "for music will be a companion which will sweeten many hours of your life." Among the composers whose works sweetened *his* life were Corelli, Carlo Tessarini, Francesco Geminiani, and Claude Balbastre, all of whom were represented in the more than one hundred sets of instrumental works in Jefferson's music library. Their works will be heard here along with vocal pieces by Haydn, William Billings, and Francis Hopkinson (another musically inclined signer of the Declaration of Independence). Despite his acknowledgment of music as "the favorite passion of my soul," Jefferson declined to appropriate money to acquire a piano when he was furnishing the new White House, in 1802. "No doubt a Pianoforte would be a perfectly proper piece of furniture," he wrote, "but in the present state of our funds, they will be exhausted by articles more indispensable." Truly the words of a violinist. (Abigail Adams Smith Museum, 421 E. 61st St. 838-6878. June 1 at 6:30.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Performing the première of Daniel Kessner's "Chamber Concerto No. 5," an octet for winds and strings. Also on the program is the *primus inter pares* of mixed octets—Schubert's—and a wind quartet by Rossini. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. June 1 at 8.)

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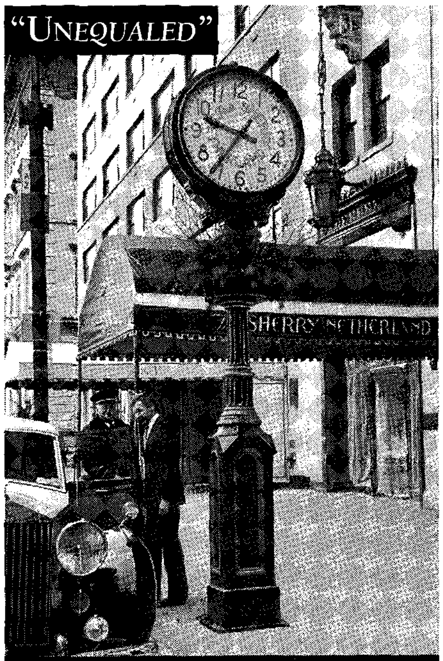

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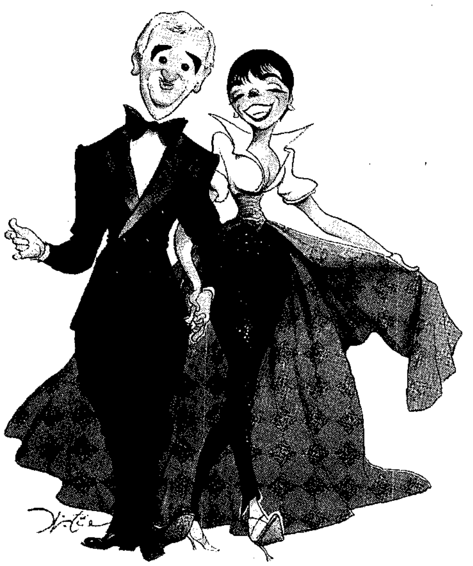
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Charles Aznavour and Liza Minnelli—The spirit of cabaret, the pristine class of Carnegie Hall, and epic sophistication should make for a perfect Fifty-seventh Street night out and an interesting exploration of the relationship between kitsch and beauty. The emotional potency that Aznavour and Minnelli share is based on a secret melancholy lurking beneath smiling warmth, and it becomes apparent, between jokes and showstoppers, in songs like his "Yesterday When I Was Young" and her "Maybe This Time." The aura of their film personas (especially in "Shoot the Piano Player" and "Cabaret") provides a further level of correspondence. With so much in common, the two singers may prove to be more than the sum of their parts. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 1-4 at 8 and June 5 at 3 and 8.)

Jeffrey Krieger—Presenting new works for cello, computer, and video. Also on the bill are composer Fred Lonberg-Holm and analog wizard Matthew Ostrowski. (Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway. 966-4444. May 26 at 8.)

Lee Ritenour—With Maxi Priest. The Yellowjackets and Acoustic Alchemy are also on the bill. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. May 27 at 8.)

Gallagher—A comedian. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6741. May 27 at 8.)



Charles Aznavour and Liza Minnelli at Carnegie Hall.

MICHAEL WITTE

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Baltimore Orioles, May 26-27 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago White Sox, May 28 at 7:30 and May 29-30 at 1:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Cleveland Indians, May 31 at 1 and June 1 at 7:30.

Mets—Vs. the Cincinnati Reds, May 28 at 7:40 and May 29-30 at 1:40.

CHAMPIONSHIPS—HOCKEY AND BASKETBALL

Underdogs—Having dispatched the heavily favored Penguins, the Islanders continue on their unlikely quest for the Stanley Cup. Versus the Montreal Canadiens, May 26 at 7:40 (if necessary).

Überdogs—As of press time, the Knicks appear to be moving inexorably toward a rematch with the Chicago Bulls. Will history repeat itself? By now, you know.

(The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000; the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Knicks at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Coast Guard Alert—Plunked between South Ferry and Red Hook is Governors Island, normally restricted to the roughly four thousand Coast Guard employees who live there. On May 29 at noon and 2:30, a Coast Guard ferry chartered by Big Onion Tours will transport curious visitors to this eerily suburban island. Its rich, mostly military history turns up the Dutchman Wouter van Twiller, who bought the island in 1637 from two Native Americans for a pair of axe handles, a string of beads, and a handful of nails; Lord Cornbury, who dressed as Queen Anne when addressing his troops with missives from Her Majesty; and the solitary-confinement cells occupied by the Smothers Brothers in the early sixties. The view of lower Manhattan is spectacular: you'll think, Hey, maybe *I* could join the Coast Guard. For information and reservations, call 439-1090.

Surf's Up!—Things start cooking at Coney Island over Memorial Day Weekend. The rides will be in full swing and the beaches will be open for swimming. At the Sideshows by the Seashore (Boardwalk West at 12th Street) the traditional ten-in-one circus sideshow will feature regulars who will appear throughout the summer: Elastic Lady, the Human Blockhead, and Illustrated Man.

Square Art—Begun in 1931 as an aid to starving Depression artists, the Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit now attracts a wide range of artists and craftsmen, showing everything from collages to landscapes to ceramic bowls. Some three hundred and fifty artists display their work along University Place (from 11th Street), down to Washington Square Park, and along LaGuardia Place down to Houston Street; there's an offshoot on Fifth Avenue between 8th and 10th Streets. May 29-31 and June 5-6, from noon to sundown. For more information, call 982-6255.

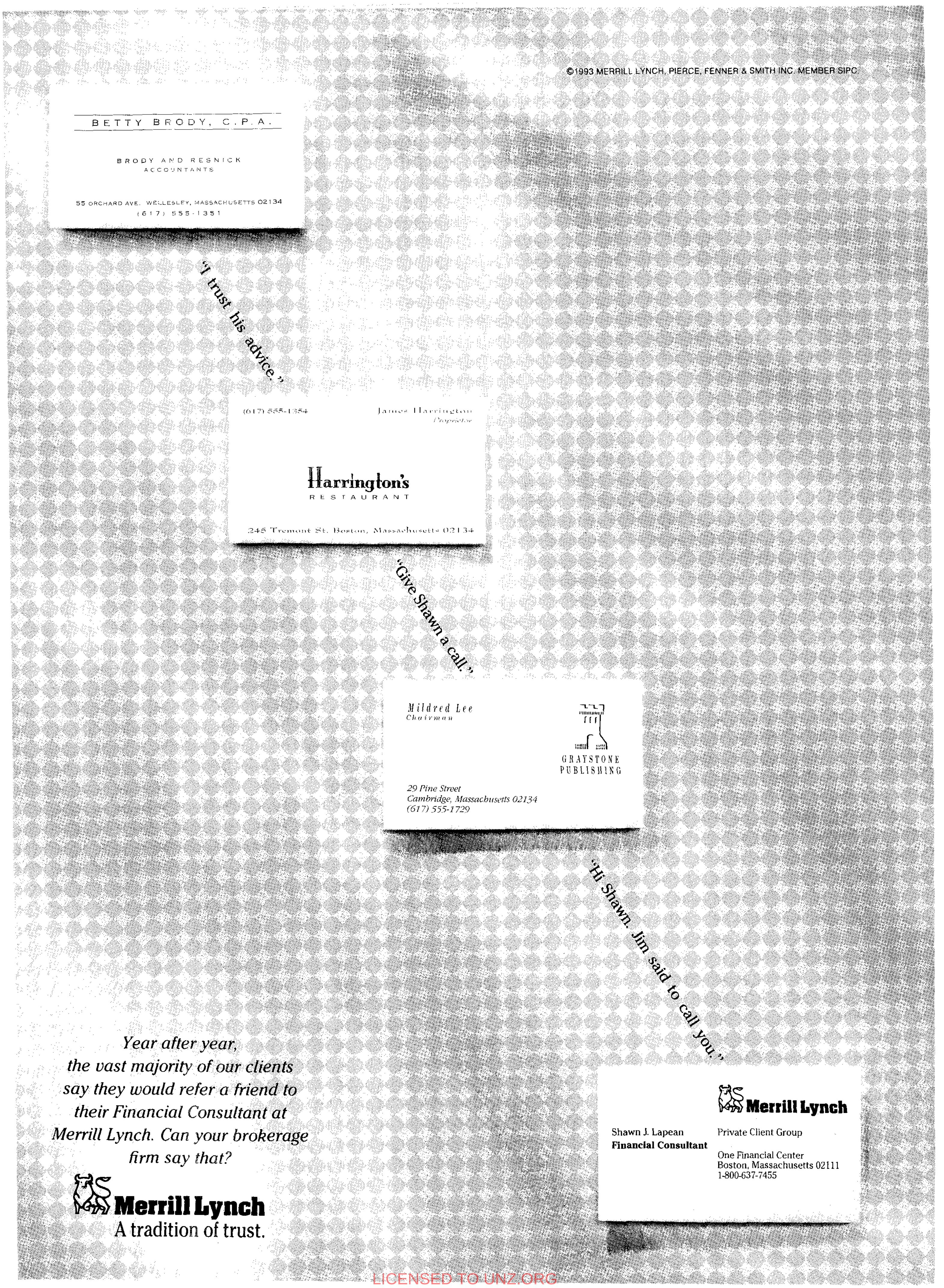
Pilsner, Pork, and Polka—The eleventh annual Czechoslovak Festival will feature Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk dancers, the Pilsner Brass Band, and traditional Czech food and drink, including roast loin of pork and Pilsner Urquell beer. (Bohemian Hall and Park, 29-19 24th Ave., Astoria. May 30-31, noon to 6. For more information, call 1-718 274-4925.)

Rosenthal & Friedman—The happy combination of Poetry Project regulars Ed Friedman, author of "Humans Work" and "The Telephone Book," and Bob Rosenthal, author of "Cleaning Up New York," will guarantee poetry that is precise, witty, moving, and free of self-righteous politics. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. May 26 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Readings—June 1 at 6:30: Actors Maria Tucci and James Naughton, among others, will inaugurate the serial reading of Ernest Hemingway's "A Moveable Feast." (Battery Park City's Hudson River Park. Tuesday nights through July 6. For directions, call 864-1414. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ June 1 at 7: David Cale and Fran Lebowitz, among others, will read from their own work in a benefit performance. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. For information about tickets, call 966-3651.). . . ¶ June 1 at 8: Joan Didion will read from her collection of essays "After Henry." (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—May 27 at 7: David Daniel in conversation with Suzanne Farrell, the former New York City Ballet principal dancer. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ May 27 at 7: Artist Francesco Clemente will discuss the influence of India on his work. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742.)

Walk—May 30 at 11: The Lower East Side, from the eighteen-twenties to the present, with historian Hope Cooke. For more information, call 1-718 852-3316.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	26	27	28	29

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sofie" (directed by Liv Ullmann; in Danish).
Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).
Theatre 5: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 6: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through May 27: "My Private War" (1990, Harriet Eder and Thomas Kufus; in German).
From May 28: (Separate admissions) "The Shining" (1980, Stanley Kubrick), with Jack Nicholson; and "My Private War."

Newman Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"The Searchers" (1956, John Ford), with Jeffrey Hunter, Natalie Wood, and John Wayne.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Dave" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams), with Charlie Sheen.
Theatre 3: "Dave" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin.
Theatre 2: "This Boy's Life" (Michael Caton-Jones), with Robert De Niro.
Theatre 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 4: "Menace II Society" (†).
Theatre 5: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce).
Theatre 6: Through May 27: "The Night We Never Met" (Warren Leight). From May 28: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin).
Theatre 7: "Sliver."

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
May 26: "Au Revoir, Mon Amour" (1991, Tony Au) and "Dragon Gate Inn" (1992, Raymond Lee).
May 27: "Once a Thief" (1992, John Woo) and "Hard Boiled" (1992, Woo).
From May 28: To be announced.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "Claire of the Moon" (Nicole Conn). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).
Theatre 3: "Who's the Man?" (†).
Theatre 4: "American Heart" (Martin Bell).
Theatre 5: "Aladdin," an animated film.
Theatre 6: "Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary.
Theatre 7: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Nemesis" (Albert Pyun).
Theatre 2: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).
Theatre 3: "Lost in Yonkers."
Theatre 4: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 5: Through May 27: "Unforgiven" (Clint Eastwood). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).
Theatre 6: "Posse" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).

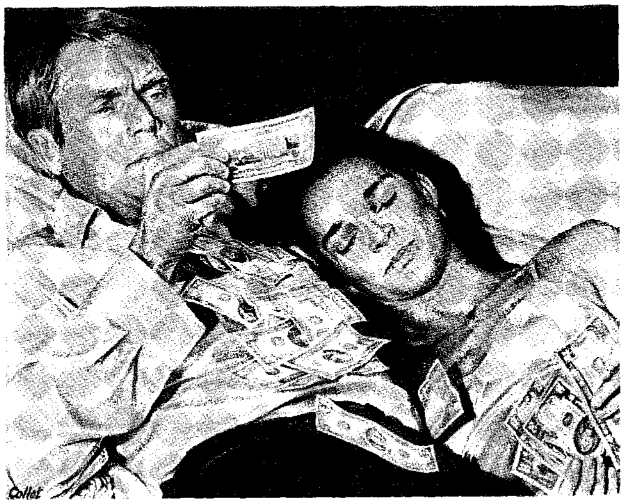
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Posse" (†).
Theatre 2: "Menace II Society" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 27: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).
Theatre 4: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce).
Theatre 3: "Sliver."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams).

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: Through May 27: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros."
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "The Crying Game" (Neil Jordan). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Steve McQueen and Ali MacGraw in "The Getaway."

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"This Boy's Life" (Michael Caton-Jones).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Howards End" (James Ivory).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).
Theatre 2: "Lost in Yonkers."

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz).
Theatre 2: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).
Theatre 3: "American Heart" (Martin Bell).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).
Theatre 2: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Night We Never Met" (Warren Leight).
Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 6: "Scent of a Woman" (Martin Brest), with Al Pacino.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through May 27: "Point of No Return" (John Badham). From May 28: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "Sidekicks" (Aaron Norris). From May 28: "Cliffhanger."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce).
Theatre 2: "Indecent Proposal" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Menace II Society" (†).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Dave" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Indecent Proposal" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Posse" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce).
Theatre 3: "Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).
Theatre 4: "The Night We Never Met" (Warren Leight).
Theatre 5: "Dave" (†).
Theatre 6: Through May 27: "Sidekicks" (Aaron Norris). From May 28: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 7: "Sliver."

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Menace II Society" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Children of Fate" (directed by Andrew Young and Susan Todd; in English and Italian), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: Through May 27: "Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography" (Arnold Glassman, Todd McCarthy, and Stuart Samuels), a documentary. From May 28: "The Long Day Closes" (Terence Davies).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).
Theatre 2: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Stolen Children" (Gianni Amelio, in Italian).
Theatre 2: "Olivier Olivier" (Agnieszka Holland; in French).
Theatre 3: "For a Lost Soldier" (Roeland Kerbosch, in Dutch).
Theatre 4: "Okoge" (Takehiro Nakajima, in Japanese).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce), with Sharon Stone, William Baldwin, and Tom Berenger.
Theatre 2: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dave" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams).
Theatre 5: "Sliver."
Theatre 6: "Sliver."
Theatre 7: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 8: "Dave" (†).
Theatre 9: "Hot Shots! Part Deux."

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (Neil Jordan).
Theatre 3: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through May 27: "My Neighbor Totoro," an animated film.
From May 28: "Happily Ever After" (John Howley), an animated film.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "The Night We Never Met" (Warren Leight).
Theatre 2: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 3: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp, Mary Stuart Masterson, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 4: "Léolo" (Jean-Claude Lauzon, in French).
Theatre 5: "Sidekicks" (Aaron Norris).
Theatre 6: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).

EDWARD COLLET

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge), with Richard Dreyfuss, Mercedes Ruehl, and Irene Worth.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Unforgiven" (Clint Eastwood).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"American Heart" (Martin Bell).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Joey Breaker" (Steven Starr).
Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"Sofie" (Liv Ullmann; in Danish).

Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Strictly Ballroom" (Baz Luhrmann).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Dave" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Indochine" (Régis Wargnier, in French).
Theatre 3: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (Zhang Yimou; in Mandarin).
Theatre 5: "Much Ado About Nothing" (†).
Theatre 6: "Stolen Children" (Gianni Amelio, in Italian).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Lost in Yonkers" (Martha Coolidge).
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "Three of Hearts" (Yurek Bogayevicz), with William Baldwin, Kelly Lynch, and Sherilyn Fenn. From May 28: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 3: Through May 27: "Indecent Proposal" (†). From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).
Theatre 4: "Sliver" (Phillip Noyce), with Sharon Stone, William Baldwin, and Tom Berenger.
Theatre 5: "Sliver."
Theatre 6: "Map of the Human Heart" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).
Theatre 2: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Bound by Honor" (Taylor Hackford).
Theatre 2: "Posse" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through May 27: "Point of No Return" (directed by John Badham). From May 28: "Made in America" (Richard Benjamin).
Theatre 2: Through May 27: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris). From May 28: "Made in America."
Theatre 3: "Who's the Man?" (†).
Theatre 4: Through May 27: "Nemesis" (Albert Pyun). From May 28: "Cliffhanger" (Renny Harlin), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 5: "Posse" (†).
Theatre 6: Through May 27: "The Crying Game" (Neil Jordan). From May 28: "Cliffhanger."
Theatre 7: "Posse" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through May 27: "Bound by Honor" (Taylor Hackford).
From May 28: "Super Mario Bros." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Menace II Society" (†).
Theatre 2: "Menace II Society" (†).
Theatre 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†).

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Sliver" (Phillip Noyce), with Sharon Stone, William Baldwin, and Tom Berenger.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hot Shots! Part Deux" (Jim Abrahams), with Charlie Sheen.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through May 27: "The Milky Way" (1936, directed by Leo McCarey), with Harold Lloyd and Adolphe Menjou.
May 28-30: "The Freshman" (see page 26); and "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock" (1947, Preston Sturges), with Harold Lloyd.
May 31-June 1: "Harold Lloyd's World of Comedy" (1962).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through May 29: "Two for the Road" (1967, Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn and Albert Finney; and "Charade" (1963, Donen), with Cary Grant and Hepburn.
May 30-June 1: "My Fair Lady" (1964, George Cukor), with Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
May 26: "Barry Lyndon" (1975, Stanley Kubrick), with Ryan O'Neal.
May 27: "Carrie" (†) and "The Fury" (†).
May 28-29: "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951, Elia Kazan), with Vivien Leigh and Marlon Brando; and "The Long, Hot Summer" (1958, Martin Ritt), with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.
May 30: "The Getaway" (1972, Sam Peckinpah), with Steve McQueen and Ali MacGraw; and "The Thomas Crown Affair" (1968, Norman Jewison), with McQueen and Faye Dunaway.
May 31: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Federico Fellini; in Itallian), with Giulietta Masina and Sandra Milo; and "Il Bidone" ("The Swindlers"; 1955, Fellini; in Italian).
June 1: "The Outsiders" (†); and "Rumble Fish" (1983, Francis Ford Coppola).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—May 27-28 at 2:30 and 6, May 29-30 at 2 and 5, and May 31-June 1 at 2:30 and 6: A series of Greek films. . . . ¶ May 27 at 3 and 6: "The Shvitz" (1993, directed by Jonathan Berman), a documentary. . . . ¶ May 28 at 3 and 6, May 29-30 at 2:30 and 5, May 31 at 3, and June 1 at 3 and 6: A series of French films.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—May 26 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "Italianamerican" (1974), "American Boy" (1978), and three short films, all directed by Martin Scorsese. . . . ¶ May 27 at 2 and 6:30 and May 28 at 4:15 and 9: "Before the Revolution" (1964, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Adriana Asti. . . . ¶ May 27 at 4:15 and 9 and May 28 at 2 and 6:30: "Mean Streets" (1973, Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, and Amy Robinson. . . . ¶ May 29-30 at 2: "Beauty and the Beast" (1946, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair. . . . ¶ May 29 at 4 and 8 and May 30 at 6: "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore" (1975, Scorsese), with Ellen Burstyn, Kris Kristofferson, and Alfred Lutter. . . . ¶ May 29 at 6:15 and May 30 at 4 and 8:15: "Take Care of My Little Girl" (1951, Jean Negulesco), with Jeanne Crain, Dale Robertson, and Mitzi Gaynor. . . . ¶ May 31 at 2 and 6:30 and June 1 at 4:15: "Murder by Contract" (1958, Irving Lerner), with Vince Edwards. . . . ¶ May 31 at 4:15 and 9 and June 1 at 2: "Taxi Driver" (1976, Scorsese), with De Niro, Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, and Jodie Foster. . . . ¶ June 1 at 6: "The Man I Love" (1947, Raoul Walsh), with Ida Lupino, Bruce Bennett, and Robert Alda. . . . ¶ June 1 at 8:45: "New York, New York" (1977, Scorsese), with Liza Minnelli and De Niro.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"What Made Pistachio Nuts? Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Tradition." May 29-30 at 2: "The Kid from Spain" (†). . . . ¶ May 29-30 at 4: "Roman Scandals" (1933, Frank Tuttle), with Eddie Cantor and Ruth Etting.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 26 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9:30: "Van Gogh" (1991, Maurice Pialat; in French), with Jacques Dutronc.

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MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Situation Comedy

"I'M just a regular fellow—step right up and call me Speedy." Harold Lloyd's title character in his 1925 "The Freshman" (playing May 28-30, at Film Forum 2) steals that salutation from a Joe College movie he's seen six times. It provides the lanky comedian with a sturdy running joke—he does a scissor-legged jig each time he repeats it—and a true signature line, summing up the desperate normality of his star persona. Lloyd comes to college so determined to be a B.M.O.C. that he buys his way into popularity, treating his schoolmates to everything from ice-cream cones to a full-dress Fall Frolic. He doesn't realize that they're simultaneously using and mocking him; his one real friend is the lovely girl (Jobyna Ralston) who tends his room in her mother's boarding house. Lloyd's comedy doesn't have the bounding inspiration of prime Chaplin or Keaton: this movie relies too much on the breezy insouciance of its title cards. But Lloyd was an acrobatic master of slapstick set pieces. In the funniest sequence, he tries to act the gracious host and dance in a basted tuxedo, with his dizzy tailor in tow. It's a gleefully extended nightmare striptease; as the seams come apart, so does Lloyd.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Carrie (1976)—The best scary-funny movie since "Jaws"—a teasing, terrifying, lyrical shocker, directed by Brian De Palma, who has the wickedest baroque sensibility at large in American movies. Pale, gravel-voiced Sissy Spacek gives a classic chameleon performance as a repressed high-school senior whose energy is released only telekinetically, and Piper Laurie plays her deep-voiced, sexy fundamentalist mother. With John Travolta, Nancy Allen, Amy Irving, and William Katt.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 27.)

Dave—Dave Kovic (Kevin Kline), the hero of Ivan Reitman's populist comedy, is a regular middle-class guy who happens to be a dead ringer for the President of the United States (also Kline). The screenplay, by Gary Ross, contrives to put Dave in the Oval Office, where he poses as the President and allows himself (initially) to be manipulated by the crafty White House chief of staff (Frank Langella). By the end of the picture, he has restored honesty and decency to the government, and has fallen in love with the First Lady (Sigourney Weaver). In the first half hour or so, the movie is hilarious, because its humor is mostly destructive; and Kline's performance as the real President is a chillingly funny portrait of Chief Executive as empty suit. But after the promisingly nasty beginning, the filmmakers settle into a sort of campaign mode, lulling and flattering the audience with a fairy-tale vision of the common man's victory over the Washington establishment. The movie's crowd-pleasing agenda inexorably saps its energy. Reitman and Ross are willing to sacrifice bite for across-the-board appeal, and they wind up with a political comedy that has no politics.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/17/93.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Tower East, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Columbus Circle.)

Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story—Bruce Lee, a kung-fu master and star of the 1973 martial-arts extravaganza "Enter the Dragon," had the sort of physical skills that even the most gifted mimic couldn't do justice to. In Rob Cohen's biographical film, Jason Scott Lee (no relation) plays Bruce, and he does well enough in the picture's many spectacular fight scenes, yet the violent production numbers don't quite capture the excitement—the aesthetic thrill—of a performance by the real Bruce Lee. Even more damagingly, the movie doesn't answer, or even formulate, the most interesting questions about its subject's odd life and unlikely career. The filmmakers are evasive about the circumstances of Lee's sudden death, in 1973, at the age of thirty-two; and they never try to explain why this phenomenally talented artist chose to express himself through *combat*. They present Bruce, for the most part, as a sweet, even-tempered young man—just another optimistic kid chasing a dream of success. This is a speedy and fairly absorbing picture, but we're always aware that something is missing. Also with Lauren Holly, Michael Learned, Robert Wagner, and John Cheung (who staged the fight scenes).—T.R. (5/17/93) (Bay Cinema, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

The Fury (1978)—Brian De Palma's visionary science-fiction thriller is the reverse side of the coin of Spielberg's "Close Encounters." With Spielberg, what happens is so much better than you dared hope that you have to laugh; with De Palma, it's so much worse than you feared that you have to laugh. The script (John Farris's adaptation of his novel) is cheap gothic espionage occultism involving two superior beings—spiritual twins (Andrew Stevens and Amy Irving) who have met only telepathically. But the film is so visually compelling that a viewer seems to have entered a mythic night world; no Hitchcock thriller was ever so intense, went so far, or had so many "classic" sequences. With Kirk Douglas and John Cassavetes.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 27.)

Indecent Proposal—The first and last scenes of this movie vaguely remind you of an old Claude Lelouch weepie—lovers looking wretched in a picturesque fog. Nothing in between is much clearer; this is a humorless, muddleheaded slog through familiar territory. David and Diana Murphy (Woody Harrelson and Demi Moore) are a young married couple, desperate for money, who vainly try their luck at the tables of Las Vegas. Enter John Gage (Robert Redford), who is so smitten by Diana that he offers her a million dollars for one night of love. That's the dilemma, but it never grips you; the director, Adrian Lyne, is bored by anything that smacks of moral complication, preferring to show us what a juicy, unflustered life you can enjoy with that kind of cash. The movie is hardly in a position to chastise Gage for his empty soul when its own style is one of numbing, desolate slickness. None of the performers is given a chance—Harrelson, previously so good in "White Men Can't Jump," looks embarrassed just to be here. And if it's sex you've come to see, don't bother: most of it was already in the trailer.—A.L. (4/26/93) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, and Embassy. . . . ¶ 84th Street Sixplex; through May 27.)

The Kid from Spain (1932)—Sam Goldwyn put a million dollars into this Eddie Cantor musical, and a fair number of them must have gone into the Busby Berkeley dance numbers. Berkeley stages a Spanish-café routine with the Goldwyn Girls forming a human tortilla, and an aquatic sequence with the Girls showing a lot of buxom wet flesh. (Some of the most attractive smiles belong to Lucille Ball, Betty Grable, Paulette Goddard, and Virginia Bruce.) Cantor and Robert Young play college boys who are innocently involved in a robbery; they escape to Mexico, where Cantor is mistaken for a matador and is forced to fight in the ring. The film has everything that money could buy—which does not include comic inspiration, though the final bullfight is fairly inventive. It's Cantor himself who doesn't wear well—maybe be-

Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel's "Super Mario Bros."

SHARMEN LIAO

cause he always retained his stage timing and delivery, which are too slow and broad for the camera. Leo McCarey directed, and Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby wrote reasonably pleasant songs and also worked on the script. The cast includes Lyda Roberti, grinning with perverse vivacity, and Ruth Hall, Noah Beery, John Miljan, J. Carrol Naish, Stanley Fields, and the matador Sidney Franklin. Cinematography by Gregg Toland.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; May 29-30.)

Map of the Human Heart—A private epic from the New Zealand director Vincent Ward, who made "The Navigator." The new film moves across continents, languages, and elements—from icepacks to hellfire and back again. Avik is an Inuit, taken from the Arctic in 1930 by an R.A.F. mapmaker named Walter Russell (Patrick Bergin) and flown to Montreal to be treated for tuberculosis. Here he meets the young Albertine, and from then on the story charts his obsessive love for her, which reaches an unlikely climax on top of a wartime barrage balloon. That image, dreamy yet sharp, and so extravagant you almost want to laugh, is typical of Ward's work. He courageously pursues the instincts of his imagination, whatever the cost may be—and in this case the cost is high, since a tale stretching over thirty years needs a fierce narrative push that he cannot really muster. There is plenty that amazes, but the action tends to smother the actors; Jason Scott Lee and Anne Parillaud look dull and soporific in the leading roles, and even Patrick Bergin cannot do much with the blurred part of Russell. Still, the film is worth staying with for the bombing scenes, when Avik (now in the R.A.F. himself) witnesses the obliteration of a German city; few directors have such an unblinking eye for horror.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Menace II Society—Directed by Allen and Albert Hughes. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, 86th Street East, and Embassy.)

Much Ado About Nothing—On the sunny side of the Bard. Kenneth Branagh leads us through the tiffs and deceptions of Shakespeare's comedy, all shot in and around a Tuscan villa. As the opening credits roll, a team of hunks rides back from the wars, and a bevy of maidens heads for the showers in anticipation; both are seen in slow motion, which suggests that Branagh will not be paying much heed to the virtues of restraint. This is confirmed by most of the performances—Branagh and Emma Thompson as Benedick and Beatrice, splashing out with grand comic gestures, and a mangy Dogberry from an unintelligible Michael Keaton. The movie revels in masked balls, creamy costumes, and caramel tans, but all this jollity feels forced—it's more of a guided tour than a relaxed show of wit, and the camera stares into people's faces, waiting for a reaction, when it should be hanging back. What potency there is comes from the characters who refuse to be gripped by good cheer—Don John, played by Keanu Reeves as a pinup with malice, and Don Pedro, played by Denzel Washington, whose cool gravity shames the rest of the movie.—A.L. (5/10/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Outsiders (1983)—Francis Ford Coppola's overblown youth movie, set in the mid-sixties, is based on S. E. Hinton's novel about Tulsa "greasers" (lower-class punks) in conflict with "socs" (bullies from the upper-class social crowd). Coppola tries to outdo the visual emotionalism of Vincente Minnelli and Elia Kazan; long shadows, odd angles, and lyrical sunsets dominate. But he misses the one distinctive quality in Hinton's writing: the way she captures the casualness of teenage volatility. It's in the movie only for a moment, when the radiant Diane Lane, as a soc cheerleader, declares that she hopes she never sees the greaser played by Matt Dillon again—because if she does, she'll fall in love with him. Elsewhere, Coppola aims for the poetry of youth and achieves mere doggerel. With Ralph Macchio, Patrick Swayze, C. Thomas Howell, and Rob Lowe. Script by Kathleen Knutsen Rowell.—M.S. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 1.)

Posse—This revisionist Western is multicultural to the max; also bloated, muddled, and anachronistic. The only reason to root for the (mostly) black heroes is that they stand up for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans against white predators. Their leader, Jessie Lee (Mario Van Peebles), fights in a black Army unit in the Spanish-American War until a cruel, capricious white officer (Billy Zane) pushes him to the breaking point. He escapes from Cuba to New Orleans with a chest of gold and some b-a-a-a-d lieutenants; then they head West. After forty minutes of seemingly random shooting and riding and glaring, it turns out that he intends to wreak havoc on the enemies of a utopian all-black frontier town named Freemanville. This chaotic pastiche climaxes with a mammoth showdown punctuated by cries of "No justice, no peace!" and "Can't we all get along?" (The title, too, is anachronistic: it refers not to sheriff's deputies but to the gang solidarity of the valiant black outlaws.) Zane and Richard Jordan (as a villainous Anglo lawman) swallow the scenery without even chewing it properly; Stephen Baldwin gives the liveliest performance as the sole white person in the posse (which also includes Tone Loc, Big Daddy Kane, Charles Lane, and Tiny Lister, Jr.). As director and star, Van Peebles contracts a bad case of pulp megalomania—he assumes epic postures as he photographs himself against the sky. With Blair Underwood as the two-faced sheriff of Freemanville; script by Sy Richardson and Dario Scardapane.—M.S. (19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Who's the Man?—This self-proclaimed "hip-hop whodunit" is more of a "why'd they do that?" Doctor Dre and Ed Lover, the hosts of "Yo! MTV Raps," play freestyle barbers who (briefly) become cops. Everything they do inside the barbershop is funny; the rest of the plot needs a trim, along with more and better gags. Dre and Lover solve a non-mysterious murder mystery and crack a real-estate-extortion scam that threatens their Harlem 'hood. The movie is simultaneously loud and lulling. The self-consciously snappy shooting and editing backfire—they create a rhythm that's more singsong than hip-hop. And the Wall of Rap on the soundtrack is overused and undermodulated—a black version of white noise. Directed by Ted Demme, from a script by Seth Greenland.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

Wide Sargasso Sea—John Duigan's adaptation of Jean Rhys's strange and memorable 1966 novel is set in the West Indies of the mid-nineteenth century, and an air of thick tropical sensuality pervades the movie's imagery. The hero, a young Englishman named Edward Rochester (Nathaniel Parker), arrives in Jamaica sick with fever after his long ocean passage; his stay on the island, during which he marries a ravishing Creole heiress named Antoinette Cosway (Karina Lombard), is a blur of heightened perception and disordered reason. As the marriage goes bad, events take on a nightmarish inevitability, as if they were moving toward a preordained end. They are: the hero of this picture is the younger self of the Rochester that Charlotte Brontë created in "Jane Eyre," the brooding landowner who kept his mad wife locked up in his English estate house; and Antoinette is the young woman who became his prisoner and his shameful secret. Duigan and his cinematographer, Geoff Burton, merge the luxuriant erotic tension of a tropical idyll with the clammy apprehension of gothic fiction. And the film is so serenely paced and so envelopingly lovely to watch that you may not realize until the end that it is, in the deepest sense, a horror movie—an intimate portrayal of the relationship between a monster and his victim.—T.R. (4/19/93) (Village East Cinemas, Cinema II, and Metro Cinema.)

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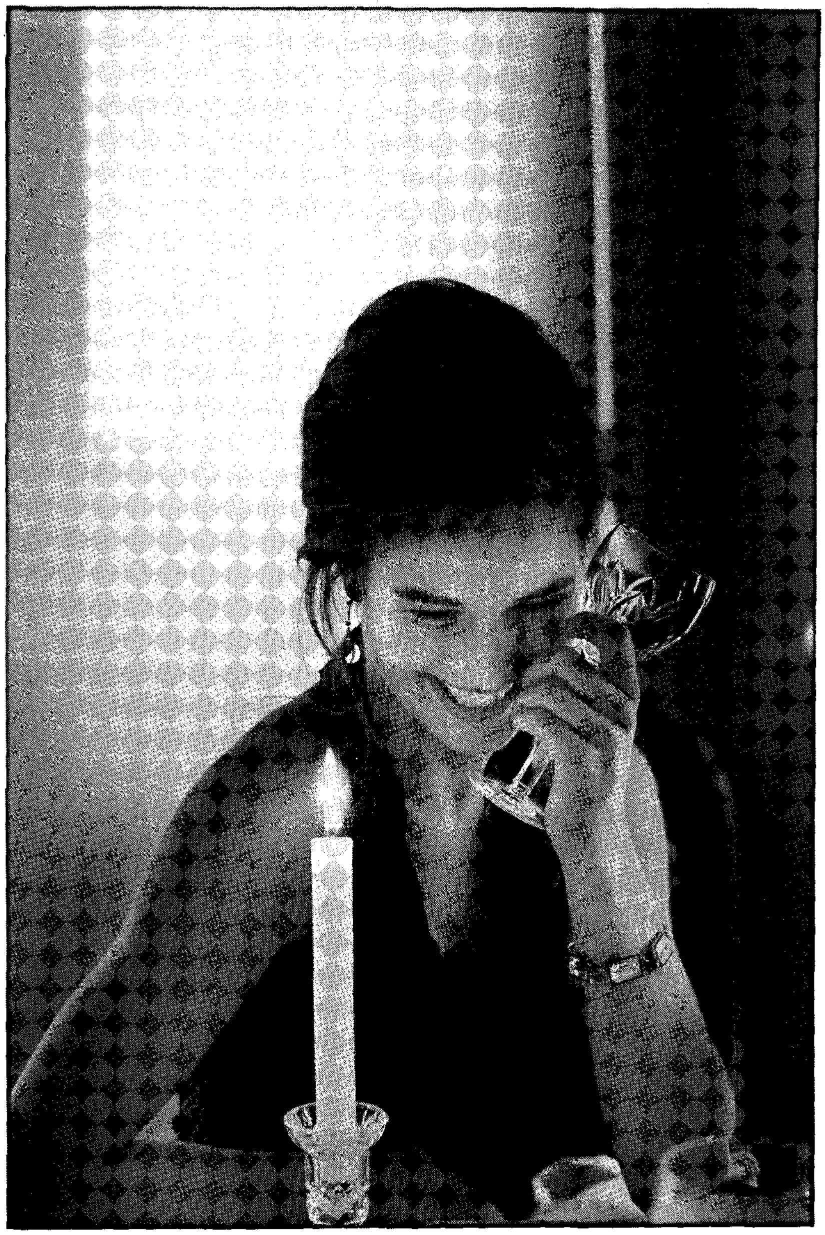

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

KAMIKAZE METHOD

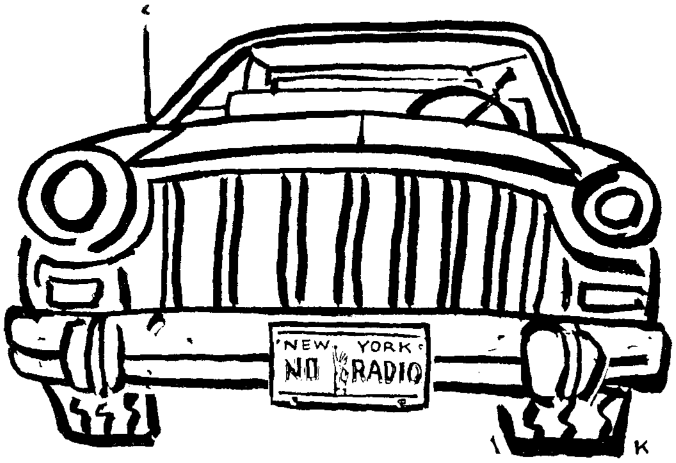
THE Actors Studio is an institution now, but it still isn't a stuffy place. Earlier this month, the theatre's cream-colored façade (it's way west on Forty-fourth Street, beyond Ninth Avenue) was strung with lanterns made from red paper and hooped bamboo. The occasion was the Studio's first International Invitational Performance Series, beginning with a show from Japan, called "The Winds of God." The play, about two reincarnated kamikaze pilots, was given in English. In the tradition of the Studio, it was a Method-style performance, the first to come out of Japan, where theatre is a formal, buttoned-up business. But the actors weren't all fluent in English, and it was strange to hear them gamely mouthing their lines in an emotive Brando style. The lines had been learned phonetically, during weeks of hard practice.

"Of course, it's difficult for us," said Masayuki Imai, who wrote "The Winds of God" and plays one of the lead roles. He's a cheery presence, thirty-two years old, from outside Osaka. He said he had trouble with the "r" sounds in English but that acting was "beyond the word." He was sitting out in the yard behind the theatre before an evening show. The rest of the cast (they play six kamikaze pilots and one nurse) slouched around on rusty lawn furniture, eating noodles from plastic-foam cups and drinking Gatorade and Snapple iced tea from bottles. When they finished their noodles, some lit up cigarettes. They wore bomber jackets and sneakers by Nike or Dunlop. They looked pretty solemn with their spiky crewcuts; some of them even looked cool.

None of the actors were making good money, so they were staying at the Days Inn on Fifty-seventh Street and cultivating a scruffy image. If they were aware of popular American culture, they weren't voluble about it. "New York and Tokyo are similar; New York is dangerous, that is all," one of them said. Toshizo Fujiwara (Second Lieutenant Yamamoto in the play) had been in a film called "Mr. Baseball" with the actor Tom Selleck. "He was great," Mr. Fujiwara said. "He was kind and strong." They knew about the roots of American Method acting and the part the Studio had played in that, and were properly deferential. "Of course, I've heard of the Actors Studio," Mr. Imai said. "To come here is my dream."

Takashi Ishinabe (he plays the kamikaze squad commander, Yamada) was a bearded man, older than the rest. He'd sold insurance in Tokyo before he took up acting. Through a translator he said that his favorite of all the great Actors Studio members was Marilyn Monroe. "She was bright, cheerful, and cute," he said. Someone else said, "I like James Dean for his appearance, but not to act." De Niro was much admired, but the nuances of his many roles weren't discussed. Marlon Brando wasn't mentioned by anybody. To prepare for the production, the troupe had studied English for a solid month. They'd gone up to the mountains north of Tokyo, to bond. They'd also met with an ex-kamikaze named Mr. Hosokawa. (He was transferred before he could go on his mission.) He was a regular businessman, they said, and very inspirational.

"It's really difficult to becomean English-speaking kamikaze pilot," said Mr. Ishinabe—talking about his role, not about real life. After that,everyone went inside and beganto do stretching exercises on a blue linoleum floor. On the wall were pictures of more Studio legends (Al Pacino, Paul Newman), in tuxedos. The play's director, Yoko Narahashi, said that it was about two comedians who find themselves back in time, in their former lives, as doomed aviators. To make it a Method piece, the actors worked from personal experience. "They were on a mission" was how she put it. The nurse had quizzed a real nurse about her duties, and others dredged up grim events in their own lives: they remembered brushes with death, awful diseases, dead friends and family.



PETER KUPER

"Charlie Chaplin, he is my

god," said Mr. Imai, doing his ankle exercises.

Ms. Narahashi, who speaks English, said that Eli Wallach and Arthur Penn had seen the show and loved it (it was scheduled for a two-week run), and that Paul Newman might be coming by that night.

"Don't tell me," Mr. Imai said. "Don't tell me."

The other actors were putting on their costumes and repeating lines from the show. ("You are airhead" was one.) Ms. Narahashi had studied at the Studio, and she remarked that preparation was so crucial. The troupe went onstage for relaxation exercises, and for several minutes each slumped around alone, groaning out loud, like a patient in a mental ward. Then all the actors rehearsed vigorously, running up and down the stage in their military undershirts, and yelling so loud that you could hear the noise out on the street.

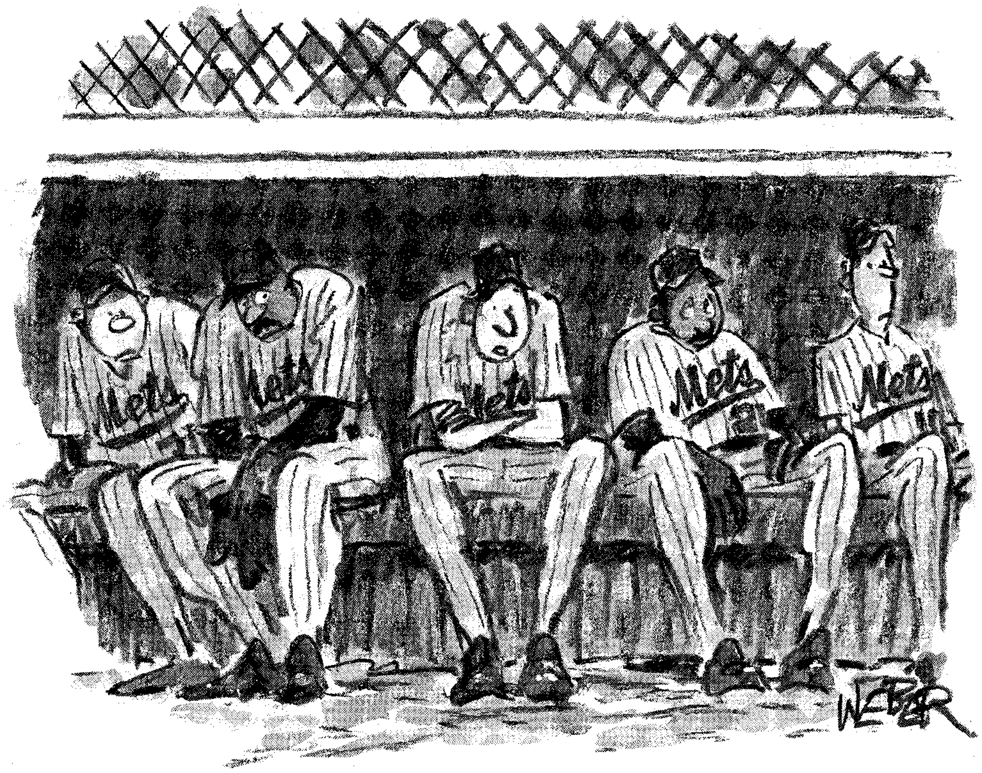
BROTHERLY LOVE

Sir James Goldsmith, the archetypal rapacious capitalist, had a dramatic change of heart a few years ago. He announced in October, 1990, that, having made hundreds of millions of dollars as an international financier and businessman, he would retire and devote his prodigious energies to the protection of the environment. The announcement delighted and astonished environmental activists, who had never thought of regarding him as one of them. As a cigar-chomping plutocrat who had made his fortune out of pharmaceuticals and junk food, Jimmy Goldsmith (he is universally known as Jimmy) appeared to belong in the enemy camp. It was his elder brother, Edward (universally known as Teddy), whom environmentalists admired. Thirty years ago, Teddy, having no gift or taste for commerce but with strong premonitions of catastrophe if the world continued to poison itself and plunder its natural resources, decided to dedicate his life to environmental causes, and since then he has carried his crusade around the world with fanaticism and panache. In 1969, he founded a British magazine named *The Ecologist*. Three years later, it put out a special issue entitled "A Blueprint for Survival," an apocalyptic document demanding revolutionary action to save the world from environmental disaster. The contents were then published as a book, which sold half a million copies in seventeen languages.

Teddy was in town the other day, still spreading his gospel of doom. Down on West Twentieth Street, at the headquarters of the Natural Resources Defense Council, a stronghold of ecologial purity in this ecologically impure city, he announced that the movement in which he has labored since the sixties had completely failed, that "things are getting worse, not better," and that within a few decades global warming would make the world uninhabitable. He was speaking at a lunch to promote another of his books, "The Way: An Ecological World-view," which has just been published in this country by Shambhala, in Boston. It had taken him thirty-five years to write, he said, and was the definitive statement of his view of the world.

That view is utopian and extreme. It blames a misguided faith in progress and economic development for the world's march toward self-destruction and sees salvation only in a return to early models of society, in which people lived together in small, self-sufficient communities and had as their overriding goal preserving the critical order of the natural world. Teddy Goldsmith sets out his philosophy in sixty-six short chapters with often long and indigestible headings, such as "The mind contains a hierarchical organization of instructions and an associated model or dynamic map" and "Natural systems can only behave homeotelically within their 'tolerance range.' " "The Way" is not likely to be a best-seller.

In person, Teddy is neither gloomy nor turgid. Though he has the beard of an ancient prophet and the rumpled look of an English country squire, he talks with the speed and enthusiasm of a high-pressure salesman, pausing only to laugh infectiously at his own jokes. In 1974, as an ecological candidate in a British Parliamentary election, he campaigned in a farming constituency on a camel, with a retinue of hippie supporters disguised as Arabs, in a wholly unsuccessful attempt to persuade the farmers that they were turning their land into desert. For a doomsayer, Teddy Goldsmith is improbably lighthearted. And now, thanks to the conversion of his brother Jimmy, he has money to spend. Between them, the brothers manage the Swiss-based Goldsmith Foundation, which finances ecological campaigns. Though Teddy refused to divulge the sums involved, he said that the Founda-



"Maybe we weren't meant to express ourselves in this particular medium."

tion had spent money supporting the cause of small farmers in France (where Jimmy lives) and of the anti-nuclear movement in England (where Teddy lives), and that in the United States it had helped finance a campaign to stop Du Pont from manufacturing hydrochlorofluorocarbons, which deplete the ozone layer.

The two brothers, at sixty and sixty-four, are perhaps closer now than they had been since they were children in Paris, where they were brought up in a world of cosmopolitan luxury by their father, Frank. A descendant of the Goldschmidt banking dynasty of Frankfurt, he had been a Member of Parliament in England before emigrating to France after the First World War, to escape the anti-German frenzy then sweeping Britain. Teddy said that Jimmy had always wanted to be involved in environmental causes but had been diverted by his business activities, and now he was rethinking his positions. "Jimmy used to be a prophet of free trade, and identified closely with the Reagan regime," Teddy said. "But now he has doubts, especially about free trade in food and between rich and poor countries. Because he has property in Mexico, he has become particularly concerned about the North American Free Trade Agreement, which would put fifteen million Mexican peasants off the land—and they'd all come to the United States." That is exactly what Teddy thinks. His way is becoming Jimmy's way, too.

SWING TIME

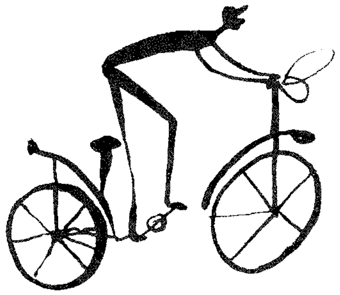
THE view from 15-E takes in hundreds of rooftops, a wide swath of the Hudson River, most of northern Manhattan, and an awful lot of sky. But it fails to dwarf its occupant, a rather short, stocky, white-haired woman in slacks and loose shirt, who recently moved down from Maine and into this New Jersey high rise, a mile or so south of the George Washington Bridge. "I've got a tape of the new CD for you to listen to," she says, pointing to a library off the sun-filled living room. "It's coming out in a few weeks, and it's called 'Here.' " Her Irish eyes smiling, she adds, "It's not called 'I'm Still Here'—just '*Here.*' "

Here is exactly where Eileen Farrell

FRANÇOISE ROUSSET

A BIKER IN THE CITY

FOR some people, a bicycle is something taken out for a pleasant jaunt in the park on weekends, an opportunity to feel the breeze in their hair and to coast alongside novice roller bladers whose eyes are wide with terror. Then, there are the brave souls who use it to make a living—the bicycle messengers, a group I once belonged to. For others, however—including me, now—a bicycle is simply the best way to get around the city, and it's the best way to see the city as well. A bicycle can provide the ideal perspective on the quilt of neighborhoods pieced invisibly together. "Neighborhood" is not the right word, though: biking through the city is like moving through a series of moods.



And looking at people is different when you're on a bicycle. Whereas most New Yorkers shun anything more than fleeting eye contact while they're walking down the street, a pedestrian and a bike rider can engage in the sort of lengthy gaze that is usually reserved for people looking at each other through a pane of glass.

The downside is the way biking around town implicates you—suddenly and without warning—in the ugly confrontational energy that seems to rise up from our sidewalks like heat.

I was recently biking down Broadway, enjoying the burst of speed that begins with the incline at Fifty-fourth Street, when a brand-new blue sports car pulled up beside me, its multiple antennas bristling. I was in the bicycle lane—more a formality than anything else, but a comforting one—and for a moment the car was right beside me. I was about to glance into the window, to see who was driving, but it suddenly jumped ahead and made a sharp left onto Forty-eighth Street, cutting me off, and sending me into a skid. For a second, I was outside the scene, watching myself from a distance as my brakes locked and the car's rear bumper brushed my leg. Then I was back in the moment, safe and undamaged.

Common sense, civility, and sheer survival instinct should have dictated that I go on my way, but I was in the grip of something else, and the blue car was pulling up at a red light down the block. I headed after it. As I approached, an ambulance came up behind me, on its way to or from some other catastrophe, its sirens wailing at a volume designed to cut through the midtown din. It was an appropriately apocalyptic soundtrack, and as I came up next to the car, shimmering in its newness, I administered a violent kick to its side. The resulting sound resembled that of a crisp piece of paper being crumpled up, and that surprised me. I turned to find out what had come of my gesture, and saw the ambulance slowing beside the car, within which I could vaguely make out someone furiously bouncing up and down in the driver's seat. And then a voice emanated from the ambulance, tremendously amplified, yet conversational in tone, almost tender. It said, "I think he damaged your car."

Damaged! What had I done? I fled down Seventh Avenue and then through side streets, like a fugitive, remorse building within me. Contemplating my unpleasant behavior in hindsight, I've concluded that biking in the city entails a kind of Faustian bargain with its streets: you can float above them, and see the city from the safe distance of the voyeur, but sooner or later the city becomes part of you. —THOMAS BELLER is, at the age of seventy-three, in the course of a singing career that took off more than fifty years ago and is still in flight. “Eight albums in the last three years,” she says, flicking her fingers on the tape deck in the library. “This one is all about the night.” The song that floods the room is “In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning,” and the warm, intimate, beautifully centered voice that cuts through the lush foliage of strings could be that of a young woman in the throes of her first romance. “I think of myself as part of the orchestra,” Farrell says. “I don’t know whether I’m a cello or an oboe. One of these days, I’ll make up my mind.”

There has probably never been a less diva-like diva than Eileen Farrell. Longtime radio fans will remember her as the soprano who sang half-hour programs with the CBS Symphony Orchestra every week for seven years in the nineteen-forties. Cinéastes will recall that she was the real singing voice behind Eleanor Parker in “Interrupted Melody,” M-G-M’s 1955 bio-pic about Marjorie Lawrence, the Australian soprano whose career was cut short by polio. Baroque music lovers cherish the memory of her years with the Bach Aria Group, during the fifties and the early sixties. Opera buffs mourn the relative brevity of her career at the Metropolitan Opera, which began in 1960 with her sensational belated début in Gluck’s “Alceste” and lasted five seasons. Aficionados of jazz vocalism count her two pop albums in the late fifties and early sixties with Luther Henderson and his orchestra as the greatest of all crossover recordings. Now she sings only classic pop, and her septuagenarian spurt of recordings includes albums devoted to the songs of Harold Arlen, Rodgers and Hart, Alec Wilder, and Johnny Mercer. Her previous album, about the end of illusion, was called “It’s Over”—a title that couldn’t have been more misleading.

Eileen Farrell grew up in Norwich, Connecticut, “in a house filled with classical and pop music—you name it,” she says. Her parents had both been in vaudeville as the Singing O’Farrells—her mother as a coloratura soprano, her father as a baritone who could imitate all kinds of birds. Farrell sang in the church choir and was chosen for the part of Buttercup in a high-school production of “H.M.S. Pinafore.” “Mother thought she should give me a couple of lessons, and, boy, did *that* not work!” she recalls. “Finally, she just said, ‘Sing naturally’ and that’s all I’ve ever done.” She came to New York in 1939. “I hadn’t the slightest idea what I wanted to be, but I was having fun and I had to have a job to *stay* in New York. I auditioned and got into the CBS chorus—honey, this was in the days when everything was *live*. Three months later, I had my own show.”

When she wasn’t learning art songs and arias, she was mixing it up with another kid radio singer, Frank Sinatra, or dropping in on the late-night club shows of her idol, Mabel Mercer. “I adored her, because of what she did with the words,” Farrell says. “When she sang ‘on gossamer wings’ you could see right *through* those gossamer wings. I always say you should sing as you speak, because that’s what’s natural. And I happen to think the words are more important than the music. Every opera I ever learned I’d first talk through with my coach, so I knew exactly what I was saying before I sang one note.”

Eileen Farrell no longer performs in public. “I stopped doing that when my husband died, a few years ago,” she says. “His name was Robert Reagan, and he was a New York policeman, half Irish, half Italian. *That* was a good combination. We were married forty years, and after we’d been married twenty-five I gave him a medal. God, he loved music—he sang high, high tenor in the policemen’s glee club—and when he died I cried all the time. Now I don’t sing live anymore. I’ve been standing up and singing for fifty-two years, and it’s too hard work.”

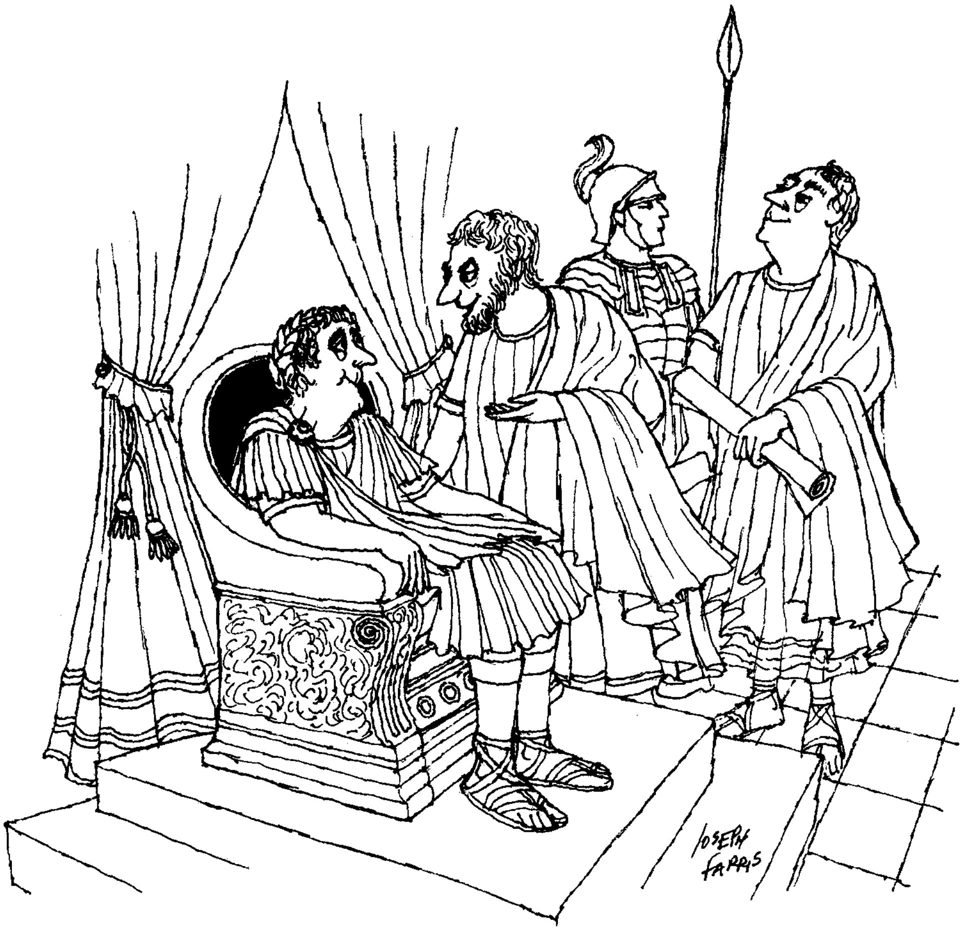
POISONED CHALICE

DANIEL BURSTEIN is a part-time investment banker with the Blackstone Group who also writes books about trade policy and international economics. He likes important people to read them, so he sent copies of his latest book, “Turning the Tables: A Machiavellian Strategy for Dealing with Japan,” to various top Administration officials in Washington. Several of them sent him thank-you notes, including Al Gore and Warren Christopher. Even the President’s office replied with a printed card expressing appreciation for the gift. But Leon Panetta, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, would have nothing to do with it. The O.M.B.’s legal officer, Robert G. Damus, wrote Mr. Burstein, “When such a gift is received by an OMB official, this office performs a review to determine whether it may be accepted. Regrettably, OMB policy prevents acceptance of this gift. I am, therefore, returning the book to you with this letter.”

Mr. Damus later explained to Mr. Burstein in a phone conversation that the Office of Government Ethics required Mr. Panetta to refuse any gift worth more than twenty dollars—and “Turning the Tables” sells for twenty-one dollars. According to Mr. Burstein, “Mr. Damus said that these rules were no joke and that the penalties for violating them were serious, including criminal prosecution.” Mr. Damus explained that the O.G.E. regulations did not apply in the same way to the President or the Vice-President, but that, as far as he knew, the Cabinet members who accepted the book were, in effect, tempting fate. The twenty-dollar limit, it turns out, went into effect on February 3rd of this year. “The new regulations cover books, tokens of appreciation like pens, even lunches,” Michael Korwin, an official of the O.G.E., said.

“Here I am trying to contribute to public debate on a serious subject, and this fellow says that it is illegal for a public official to accept my book,” Mr. Burstein complained. “Something is wrong with a law that doesn’t distinguish between an author sending a book to an official and a lobbyist sending him a set of golf clubs."

But Mr. Burstein got no sympathy from Representative Barney Frank, a Massachusetts Democrat and a congressional expert on government ethics. "The O.M.B. decision strikes me as a reasonable response to the climate the media have created," he told us. "At this point, it's impossible to anticipate what the media will seize on as a sign of corruption. You can't say that the fact that it's a book that could help these officials do their jobs makes any difference. What if it were a novel? What if it were a membership in the Book-of-the-Month Club? What if it were a subscription to the New York *Times*? Gifts like this accumulate, and someday you may see a story on the Federal Page of the Washington *Post* that says some official is a bad guy because he has accepted hundreds of books. You get to the point where you say the hell with it—I don't need this. If I want a book, I'll buy a book."



"Surely, as the world's only superpower, we're entitled to a little mischief now and then."

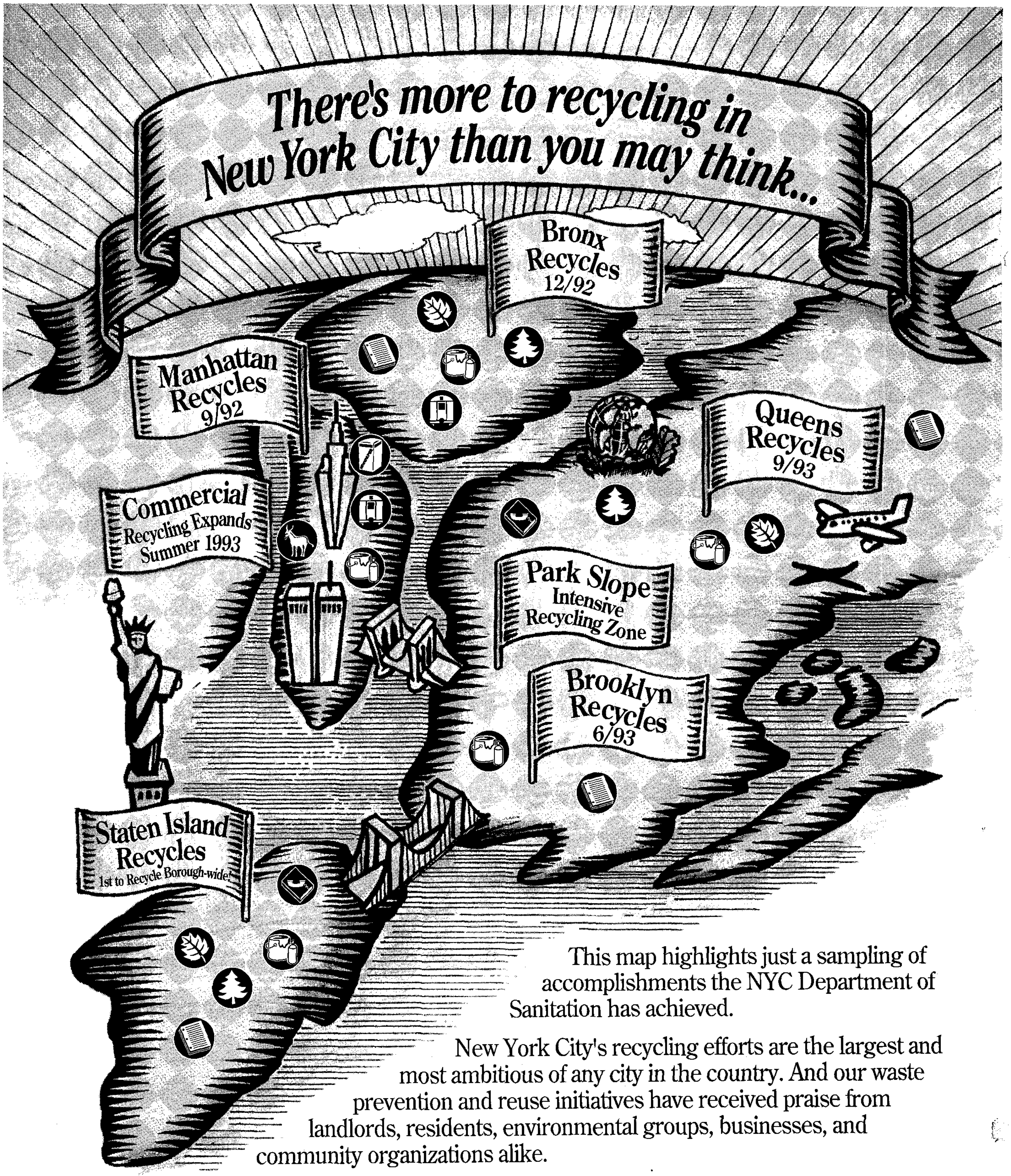
DOT-HEADS

NOT long ago, in Maplewood, New Jersey, a group of stipplers got together for a back-yard barbecue. The Concise Oxford Dictionary says that the word "stipple" means to "draw or paint or engrave etc. with dots instead of lines," and that's what stipplers do. A portly man named Richard Baratz took a dollar bill from his pocket and pointed to George Washington's face. "Look closely and you'll see you've got a main dot, a cross dot, and an interdot," he said, with some vigor. Other stipplers wandered around with their food, exchanging greetings and talking shop. "I dot every day," Noli Novak said. "It's been six years now." She was a slim woman, with pencilled brows. When not stippling, she said, she was the lead singer for a punk band called Gluegun.

The stipplers refer to themselves as "dot-heads" or, more commonly, "hedcutters," and they are an élite group of illustrators as far as the *Wall Street Journal* is concerned. Since the Second World War, editors at the *Journal* have preferred pen-and-ink portraiture to photography. Various types of drawing have been tried, but since the early nineteen-eighties the dot has prevailed. The portraits, called "hedcuts," are a signature of the newspaper now, and on the ninth floor of the Dow Jones building, downtown, five desks are occupied by stipplers. Several times each day, they will create mock engravings out of grainy snapshots of the featured figures of that day: Ivan Boesky or Warren Christopher; the most heavily tattooed man in Russia; a three-toed sloth.

The *Journal* has considered using computers, to see if software can substitute for stipplers, but no one at the picnic seemed concerned. Hai Knafo, the chief stippler, said that just the other day an artist had to draw a portrait of a clean-shaven man who was wearing a mustache in the only available photograph. So the artist had to improvise. "You have to use your imagination," Knafo said. Recently, a female employee at the *Journal* accused the stipplers of drawing women's heads smaller than men's. A free-lance stippler named Bill Hallinan said that this may be true, although there's nothing sexist about it. "If we crop a woman's head ear to ear, the way we do with men, her hair appears to be sort of square," he explained. "So we have to include more hair, which makes the face appear smaller in the hedcut."

The picnicking stipplers were full of tips like this. A woman with a child on her hip said that when she stippled she liked to touch each of her dots twice with her pen. "If you don't touch each dot twice, it's no good," she said. Baratz continued his discourse on the dollar bill. "The cross dot is one and a half times the width of the main dot," he said. "Try it, but don't let your cross dots touch!" The hostess, whose name was Laura Lou Levy, said she had been dotting faces at the *Journal* since 1984. She said that stipplers were friendly people who loved to talk. She looked around at the happy crowd (nine stipplers had showed up) and smiled. "We know so many things about each other's lives," she said. ♦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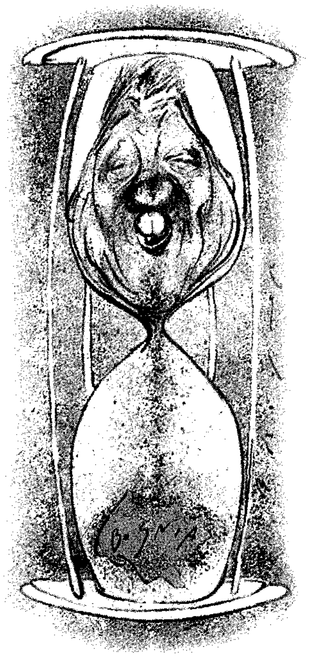
LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

LONESOME HAWK

President Clinton's deferral of his proposed air strike against the Serbs could undermine his international clout.

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL



JANUSZ KAPUSTA

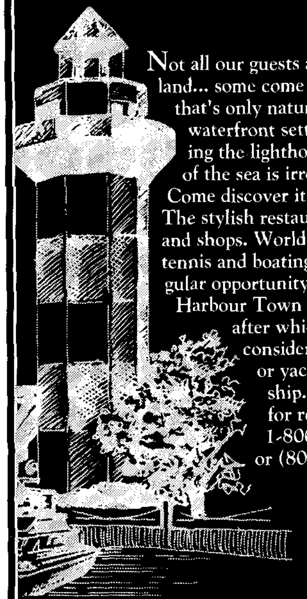
BILL CLINTON'S leadership in the first great foreign-policy crisis of his Presidency is a study in purpose without power. His moment of decision regarding Bosnia, if there was one, came on Saturday, May 8th, when Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived at the White House to report to the President on his canvass of the European allies. After learning of their rejection of his initiative, known as "lift and strike"—lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnians and striking the Serbs with air power—the President found himself unarmed.

Clinton had understood the events from the beginning, but he treated their complexities as matters of ratiocination. He gave what he decided were the correct answers to the questions, like a straight-A student, rather than instructing others. His consultations verged on deference. His approach was to grope for a safe path out of the darkness. He knew where his analysis led him, but he would not act on it. His position amounted to public speculation about what he would do, if he could. Grappling with contending visions of the past, he would not define history for his own use. He encountered a cacophony in Congress, which he decided not to quell. And he met with a sophisticated cynicism in Europe, which prevailed in the absence of decisive American leadership.

The debate over Bosnia is enveloped in layers of historical metaphor. For some, it is the Holocaust: never again, they say, should the Western conscience abandon a scorned minority in Europe to genocide. For others, the most resonant past is the period leading up to the Second World War, when America was riven by isolationists and interventionists. In either of these contexts, diplomacy without force takes on the appearance of appeasement. For still others, the reigning metaphor comes from a more recent war: Vietnam. In their view, intervention in any foreign land threatens to be a quagmire, and any use of force short of immediately overwhelming power that achieves total victory must be scrupulously avoided.

But the nation's political alignments, which rigidly held for a generation, magnetically polarized by Vietnam, have been released by the ending of the Cold War. The Bosnian conflict did not re-create them. On the contrary, hawks sprouted the plumage of doves and doves grew sharp talons. (The preëminent hawk on Bosnia in the Senate is Joseph Biden, Democrat of Delaware, a onetime sixties idealist; among the leading doves is John McCain, Republican of Arizona, who piloted a bomber and was taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese.) Bemedalled generals spent part of their days arguing that gays would destroy military discipline and another part resisting intervention like dedicated pacifists. And a President who had marched against the Vietnam War contemplated bombing in the Balkans.

IN Serbia, historical metaphor has had an even more mesmerizing effect. Yugoslavia was an artificial state imposed on hostile religious and national groups: Croatian Catholics, Serbian Eastern Orthodox, and Bosnian Mus-



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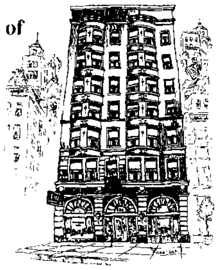

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lims. Many of the Muslims are more Westernized than their Serb counterparts, and there is no ethnic difference between the two groups. The Muslims are not Turks or Arabs but Europeans, whose ancestors became converts during the Ottoman Empire. Most are secular. Bosnia is like a city-state, centered on cosmopolitan Sarajevo, which was the only place in Yugoslavia where pluralist tolerance and civility truly prevailed.

When Slobodan Milosevic staged a coup in Belgrade, in 1987, he jettisoned the decrepit Communism he had loyally served for a resurgent nationalism. His rise, a symptom of disintegration, accelerated the process. First, Slovenia and Croatia seceded; then Macedonia. Serbia and Croatia were already at war. When that conflict faded, Milosevic's drive for Greater Serbia pushed into Bosnia. Bosnia had been formally organized as a multiethnic democracy precisely to escape Milosevic's tyranny. The Bosnian Serbs, however, envisioned themselves linked by a blood connection to Greater Serbia and pledged to refight the ancient battle against "the Turks," who were in reality their neighbors. In this holy war, the Bosnians suffered an immense disadvantage. The United Nations had imposed an arms embargo against Milosevic's Yugoslavia; yet, despite this, his Army was easily able to supply the Bosnian Serb rebels with weapons. But the Bosnians, lacking a supplier, remained virtually defenseless. All Bosnian men have long been subjected to a year of military training, and their numbers exceeded those of the Bosnian Serb army. But the embargo, while ostensibly universal, was punitive only against those on the defensive: the Bosnians.

The war invaded the American consciousness in the summer of 1992, with reports of concentration camps and televised scenes of murdered babies. These disquieting images happened to fall into the middle of the Presidential campaign. President Bush adopted a policy of studied indifference. The last thing Bush's campaign strategists wanted was for their candidate to immerse himself in foreign turmoil where American stakes would have to be carefully and lucidly explained. On July 26th, Governor Bill Clinton sought to outflank Bush on foreign policy and dispel the suspicion that he was in the grip of an incapacitating Vietnam syndrome, which Republicans had charged for years was at the core of the Democrats' weakness. Air strikes against the Serbs, Clinton declared, were in order. His stand on Bosnia gave him a novel way to insulate himself against a burdensome political legacy. On October 11th, while he was being assailed as a Vietnam-era "draft dodger," Clinton said he would "consider" lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnians, "since they are in no way in a fair fight with a heavily armed opponent bent on 'ethnic cleansing.' " He added, "We can't get involved in the quagmire, but we must do what we can."

After Clinton's election, the Serbian leadership shrewdly maneuvered to undermine a policy they anticipated would be tougher. They agreed to discuss further the peace plan designed by former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and former British Foreign Minister David Owen—Vance representing the United Nations, Owen the European Community. The Vance-Owen plan would divide Bosnia into ten virtually autonomous provinces, in which the contending parties would be isolated. The tenuous multiethnic Bosnian democracy would disappear; what would remain of the central government would have hardly any powers. So the Serbs were in Geneva to bicker over squiggles on the map. At the same time, they continued the offensive for Greater Serbia, since they believed that in the end the map would reflect the facts on the ground.

Clinton was horrified at the prospect of ratifying the carnage. Then he discovered that the Europeans resolutely opposed the suggestions he had made as a candidate: lifting the arms embargo and initiating air strikes. Thus the President embarked on a meandering journey. In his first statement on the subject as Chief Executive, on February 5th, he expressed his reluctance to embrace the Vance-Owen plan, on the ground that it "might work to the immediate and to the long-term further disadvantage of the Bosnian Muslims." A week later, Clinton worried that "the terrible principle of 'ethnic cleansing' will be validated; that one ethnic group can butcher another if they're strong enough." By the end of the month, stymied by the European resistance to new initiatives, he was encouraging the Bosnians to "engage in negotiations within the Vance-Owen framework." And on March 1st, frus-

"*What happens when* _I_ *become a reality?*"

trated by Serbian aggression, Clinton began a large-scale airdrop of food into beleaguered eastern Bosnia. When, on March 5th, Clinton remarked that the United States "cannot proceed here unilaterally," he was describing at once the necessary condition for action and the principal obstacle to it.

On March 24th, he said, "I am appalled by what has happened there; I am saddened; I am sickened." The next day, under United States pressure, the Bosnians signed the Vance-Owen plan, and Clinton promulgated a no-fly zone over Bosnia. About three weeks later, with the Bosnian town of Srebrenica about to fall to Serbian forces, and with bloody pictures again flooding the network news, Clinton was "outraged" that the Serbs had not signed Vance-Owen. He spoke of a larger danger: "If you look at the turmoil all through the Balkans, if you look at the other places where this could play itself out in other parts of the world, this is not just about Bosnia. On the other hand, there is reason to be humble when approaching anything dealing with the former Yugoslavia." But ten days after that, on April 26th, the President appeared determined to surmount obstacles, declaring, "It is now, I think, clear that the United States and our allies need to move forward with a stronger policy in Bosnia, and I will be announcing the course that I hope we can take in the next several days." Action seemed imminent.

"IT'S sort of a no-brainer," a senior Administration official remarked to me about how to reach the solution to the problem. Clinton's plan was now the same as the one he had suggested during the campaign: lift and strike. Clinton had gone through the intellectual process more intensively than he had during the hurried campaign. Once again, he had cracked the conundrum that stumped others.

"I don't know of any peace settlements that didn't ratify what existed on the ground," the official said. "So much is at stake. We don't want to lose. We must have achievable goals. The advantages of lifting the embargo are that it's something we can do: it's a clear goal. And we can succeed in delivering the weapons." If the Croats skim off some of them, so be it: "Making the argument that this would increase violence allows the aggressor to continue 'ethnic cleansing' against an outgunned victim." This axiom of European diplomacy is "exquisite condescension," the official said. "There is the right of a recognized government to defend itself. The embargo was imposed before recognition of Bosnia." The Bosnian Serb army, moreover, is not a formidable force—not the fabled partisans of the Second World War but a motley assemblage of thugs, many of whom are usually drunk, and who have taken few casualties. Under the plan, air power would give the Bosnians time to get armed and would also give cover to allied troops, who could easily be armed with superior weaponry themselves. Much of the Serbian artillery could be knocked out. The Bosnian Serbs, even though buttressed by regular Army units, might wilt quickly. They are far below Iraqi standards. There would be no United States ground troops; the Bosnians would do the fighting. "But it's not going to be successful as Americans see success," the official warned. Good won't unconditionally triumph over evil, even if one side should be all good and the other all evil. But a new "balance of power" could be achieved, which would roll back the dream of Greater Serbia. It was this plan that Clinton subscribed to in early May.

First, Clinton turned to Congress. Senator Biden had just returned from a trip on which he had met with Milosevic and with Bosnian leaders, and on April 19th, as chairman of the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Foreign Relations Committee, he had filed a report that was read closely, according to a top official, by the Secretary of State and the President. "Every Bosnian I encountered, government official and common citizen alike, was convinced that they could succeed in defending their country if given the means and supported by airstrikes against Serb artillery," Biden wrote. "However well intentioned, the presence of U.N. relief personnel and peacekeeping forces, by inhibiting stronger Western action, now constitutes more an obstacle than a contribution to the humanitarian relief they were deployed to provide."

On April 27th, ten leaders from the House of Representatives and eight senators sat around a long table in the

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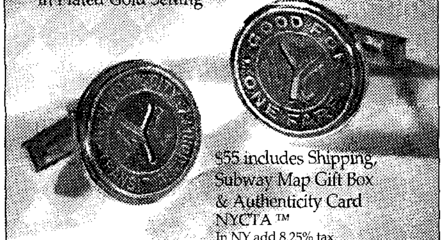

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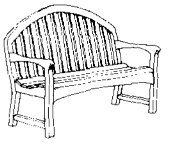

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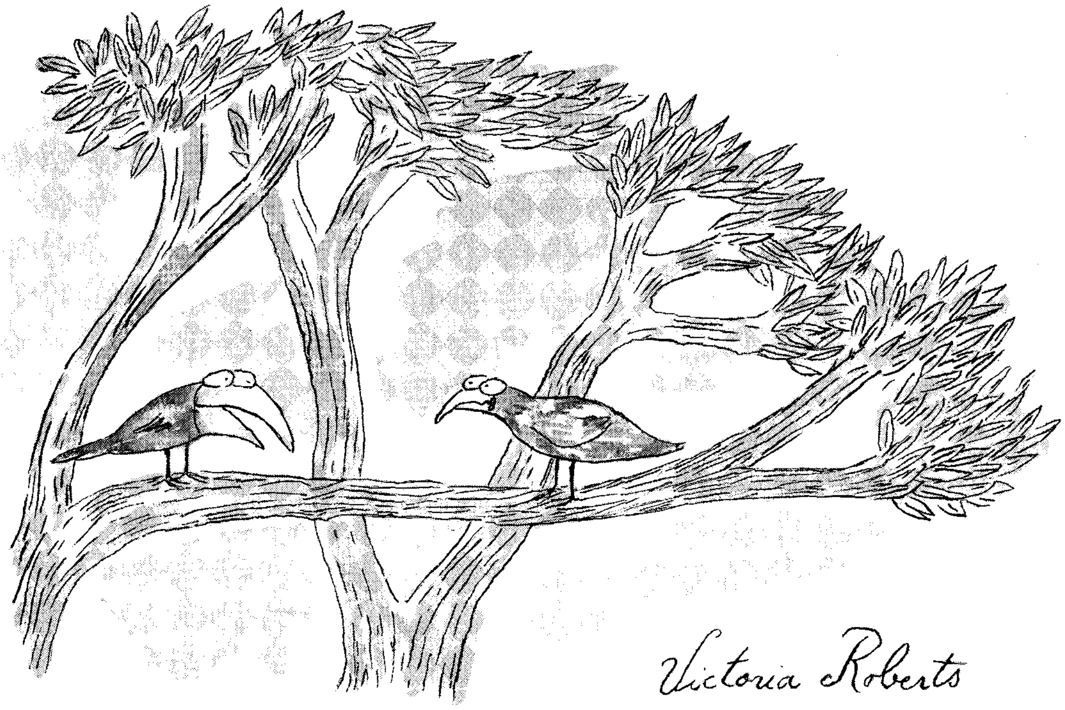


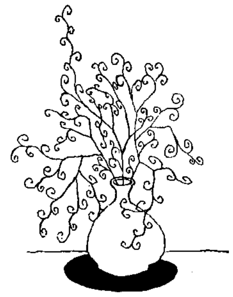
"To be a flamingo, or better still a toucan, in the sixties—that was really something."

• •

White House for three and a half hours. Clinton listed options, from doing nothing to sending in ground troops. "I want to see what you think," he said. According to a well-informed source, each of the eighteen was asked his opinion, in order of seniority. The House Speaker, Thomas Foley, said that whatever was done should receive the consent of Congress. The Senate Majority Leader, George Mitchell, agreed that now was the time for action. No, it was not the time, Lee Hamilton, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, insisted. Perhaps action would be called for at a later date, he said, but now it would only inspire the Serbs to more violence. In any case, Milosevic seemed genuinely interested in making peace. Biden countered that Milosevic was a war criminal, who couldn't be trusted. He urged lifting the embargo and conducting air strikes—the Administration's desired course. Senator John Warner, Republican from Virginia and the constant sidekick of Sam Nunn, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, warned that air strikes would not work. Nothing less than invading with five hundred thousand troops would do, and it would still be a quagmire. Ronald Dellums, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and a left-wing voice from Berkeley, spoke vaguely about defining goals and broader contexts, and then simply said, "Vietnam." Representative John P. ("The 'P' is for Power") Murtha, Democrat from Pennsylvania and a former marine, vehemently opposed action, time and again invoking Vietnam. But Senator Richard Lugar, who had been the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee when the Republicans were in the majority, argued for force. If "lift and strike" did not produce the desired outcome, he said, then we would have to be prepared to send in troops; once begun, the operation could not be permitted to fail. Then Bob Dole made his contribution: he was for lifting the embargo, for air strikes, and, if that didn't work, for whatever force it took. While seeming to support Clinton, he was also laying down a political marker. Dole, after all, is not just Clinton's nemesis in Congress; he might well be the 1996 G.O.P. Presidential nominee. Those present were keenly aware of the subtext when Dole said to the President, "America's prestige could not tolerate it not working. It would cost you very dearly." Though Dole and Mitchell agreed that if the President requested it they would co-sponsor a joint resolution for force, the meeting ended without the consensus Clinton had hoped for.

A week later, Clinton met with Senator Dale Bumpers, his old friend from Arkansas, who had just returned from the former Yugoslavia. "The chances of getting a resolution through here right now are point-blank zero," Bumpers says he told the President. "The American people know nothing about Bosnia. In the ordinary American mind the Vietnam corollary is almost total." Indeed, a CNN/*USA Today*/Gallup poll published on April 27th showed that sixty-two per cent of the American people were against any United States military action.

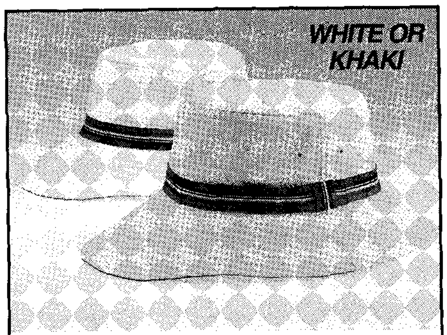
Clinton faced another obstacle in the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Members of Congress who were briefed by Colin Powell were hardly galvanized; rather, they were given cause for discouragement. Repeatedly sent out to make Clinton's case, Powell repeatedly justified his opposition. When he tried to state the Administration's position, he was questioned about his own well-advertised dissent. "I haven't changed my views," he boldly told one group of House members. At a meeting of NATO's military committee, also on April 27th, Powell participated in a meeting that condemned any policy for further action. The committee chairman, Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, of Great Britain, reflecting his government's position, told a press conference in Brussels, "I am healthily skeptical." The chairman of the Joint Chiefs, a Vietnam veteran, in fact opposed intervention unless it followed his precept of "invincible force." Perhaps more than anyone else, the nation's most powerful general was stricken with the Vietnam syndrome. He had been against the buildup of Operation Desert Shield, precisely because he feared that it would not meet his criterion. Before Clinton was inaugurated, Powell volunteered to him that a Bosnian intervention short of five hundred thousand men would fail and that even such a force might not succeed. Clinton had no stomach for confronting Powell, who is the most popular black public official in the country, and whose term, in any case, expires in September. "We all understand what's going on. He's got the President mousetrapped," a Senate aide said. "Powell is being very coy, and he's full of political egotism. I can't remember when a President has been in such a situation." As it happens, Admiral Jeremy M. Boorda, who is in charge of the NATO forces in Southern Europe, does not share Powell's view of military capabilities and prospects, according to the Senate aide, who has spoken to Boorda at length on several occasions. But Boorda expresses his assessment only privately, to United States officials, following strict lines of authority, and declines to be interviewed. Powell's mystique shadows any military enterprise. One senior White House staffer has worried that if anything went wrong in a Bosnian intervention Powell might actually plot to use it politically to damage the President.



In early May, unable to forge a consensus at home, Clinton sent his Secretary of State abroad. Warren Christopher's own position had gyrated over the months, and his oscillations had contributed to a State Department revolt. In the beginning, on February 10th, Christopher had said that the Bosnian crisis "tests what wisdom we have gathered from this bloody century, and it measures our resolve to take early concerted action." Six weeks later, he cast the situation as a waking nightmare that could not be made to disappear. "It's almost terrifying, and it's centuries old," he said. "That really is a problem from hell. And I think that the United States is doing all we can to try to deal with that problem." When Margaret Thatcher called for decisive military intervention, Christopher dismissed her statement as "an emotional response to an emotional problem," as though it were a menstrual cramp. But the problem would not return to the netherworld from whence it came. In April, twelve State Department experts wrote Christopher a letter, which was leaked to the *Times*. "We are only attempting to end the genocide through political and economic pressures such as sanctions and intense diplomatic engagement," the letter read. "In effect, the result of this course has been Western capitulation to Serbian aggression."

The consistent hawks within the Administration councils were the director of the National Security Council, Anthony Lake; his deputy, Sandy Berger; and Vice-President Al Gore. As Clinton had moved in favor of force, so had Christopher. But when the President dispatched Christopher to feel out European opinion, which was already obvious, he did not empower him to compel adherence. (It is hard to imagine James Baker undertaking a mission without power.) On May 2nd, when Christopher arrived in London, his first stop, he was met with the news that the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, had agreed to the Vance-Owen plan. Christopher, according to a State Department official, was skeptical about the Serbs' intent. But throughout Europe the signing was greeted with immense relief, as though the crisis were about to end in a flurry of diplomacy. None of the allies agreed with Clinton's options, nor were they particularly eager to discuss them. While Christopher travelled, Slobodan Milosevic addressed the self-styled Bosnian Serb parliament to argue that it should support Vance-Owen because doing so would codify a Greater Serbia victory. "One should not gamble away what one has already gained," he admonished. But the parliament decided to consign the plan to a referendum, thus dooming it to certain rejection. The fact of the referendum, however, provided grounds for more European temporizing. There could be no decisions, they told Christopher, until they knew the referendum's outcome: give Milosevic a chance.

So the Secretary reported to the President. Clinton listened to Christopher, as Christopher had listened to the Europeans. Christopher urged him to "stay the course," and so did Anthony Lake, according to someone privy to the discussion. The President did not recant on his stated desire to lift the embargo and order air strikes. But, facing ambiva-



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lence, confusion, and reluctance, here and abroad, he decided he would not go to war on all fronts. By professing a position that had become merely an academic opinion, the President sided with the forces of inertia. Already dressed in his golf clothes, he headed for the links.

On the day before Christopher returned, Haris Silajdzic, the Bosnian Foreign Minister, decided to tour the new Holocaust Museum, in Washington. Silajdzic, a forty-eight-year-old former diplomatic historian, is operating alone out of a hotel on the edge of Georgetown. His wife and six-year-old son live shielded outside Bosnia; he has not seen them in two months. "Europeans think we are not proper Europeans, because we are Muslim, and the Muslims think we are not proper Muslims, because we are European," he says. "Bosnia, it's so exotic."

He is escorted into the museum ahead of the morning crowd—a group consisting mostly of senior citizens and students, in a line that snakes around the building. Inside the dim, industrial environment, Silajdzic walks slowly from exhibit to exhibit, drawing comparisons. "People don't believe you. It couldn't be happening. But it's not over." He points to Bosnia on a map of Europe. "The virus is there," he says. "There are those who say we should not be reminded. It is better to walk through a museum than a concentration camp."

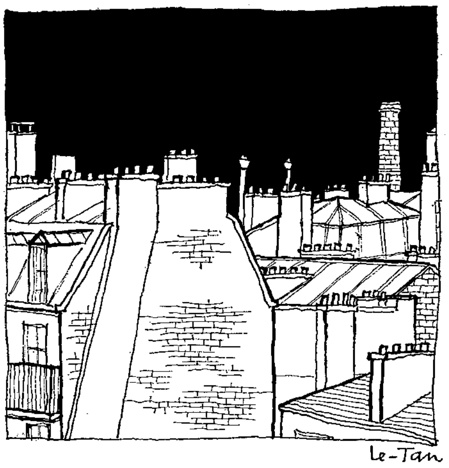
He stops to gaze at a poster promoting "Grosdeutschland, Ja!," and he notes the parallel to Greater Serbia. Then he pauses at a display about Munich. "Our people have lived together for hundreds of years," he says. "These savages say we can't live together. These savages try to build walls. In Europe they seem to prefer tribal chiefs to democracy. Easy decisions can be taken by anyone. Europe is silent, a chain of Chamberlains. In fifty years they will condemn it."

Silajdzic sees all the awful pictures and artifacts of systematic death. But what arouses and upsets him most is a quotation he discovers in a section devoted to the negligent role of American policymakers. The words that rivet him were written by Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy, who became the epitome of the postwar establishment. It was McCloy who advised against sending Allied bombers to destroy Auschwitz. The bombing, McCloy wrote, "might provoke even more vindictive action by the Germans." Silajdzic repeats the line over and over. "So history does not repeat itself," he says, assuming the mantle of the historian he was in easier times. "But we repeat the same mistakes."

The diplomatic scurrying continues. In a ritual washing of hands, Christopher told the House Foreign Affairs Committee on May 18th that Bosnia was, after all, "a morass," and that ethnic cleansing bore no resemblance to genocide: "It's been easy to analogize this to the Holocaust, but I never heard of any genocide by the Jews against the German people."

The small crisis is over, but not the larger one. It seems implausible that without force the Vance-Owen plan in its pristine form can be put into effect: it would reduce the Serb share of Bosnia to forty-three per cent, but seventy per cent has already been grabbed. The logic of war always dominates the logic of diplomacy. Low-intensity warfare may go on, but the conquest, barring a radical intervention, belongs to Milosevic. He has won his Greater Serbia, leaving some enclaves in which the Muslims can huddle. While the West frets about containing Serbia, preventing its expansion into Macedonia and Kosovo, the next war may instead be the next round in the Serbs' continuing war with Croatia—settling borders by fighting over bits and pieces of Bosnia.

The ragged—Balkanized, in fact—nature of this episode masks its importance. Bosnia has not been just about Bosnia. If NATO had any mission after the Cold War, it was to maintain European stability; it has now been revealed to be without purpose. The Europeans, dealing through various international agencies, made gestures of coping, which naturally failed. Ultimately, what they wanted from the United States was partnership in blame. Without the United States to direct it, the Western alliance is little more than an armored vehicle bearing relief. Clinton's post-Bosnian foreign policy confronts the ruin of NATO.



The triumph of Milosevic may mark the true beginning of the post-Communist era. Just as the breakup of Yugoslavia foretold that of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, so may the ascent of the Serbian strongman be a harbinger. Milosevic, not Havel, may be the New Man. A tradition more deeply rooted in the region than democracy may be stirring. If it comes alive, politics will be ruled by demogogic nationalist appeals and by fear and loathing of others. Democracy will be a façade. The Bosnian crisis has already illuminated the West's complacency about its incapacity to act. Authoritarian populism—Le Pen in France, the Republicans in Germany, Perot in America—is on the rise. Such movements may not necessarily gain power, but they consume democratic politics with efforts to placate and contain them.

In the crisis, the role of master was played not by the American Secretary of State or by the President but by an authoritarian in Belgrade. Clinton sought support for a policy he was not prepared to fight for. His intentions were well meaning, but, finding himself amid political difficulties, he would not take the leap into the unknown. He wished for consensus in a situation that could work only by coercion. Clinton's mandate is to be a domestic-policy President, but if he falters in foreign policy his Presidency will be fatally undermined. There are few things more dangerous to a President's and a nation's credibility than the suggestion of commitment without putting force behind it. "By prestige I mean the shadow cast by power, which is of great deterrent importance," Dean Acheson, Truman's Secretary of State, wrote in his memoir, "Present at the Creation." Without power, of course, there is not even a shadow. ♦

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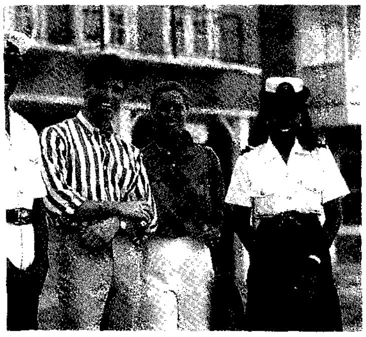

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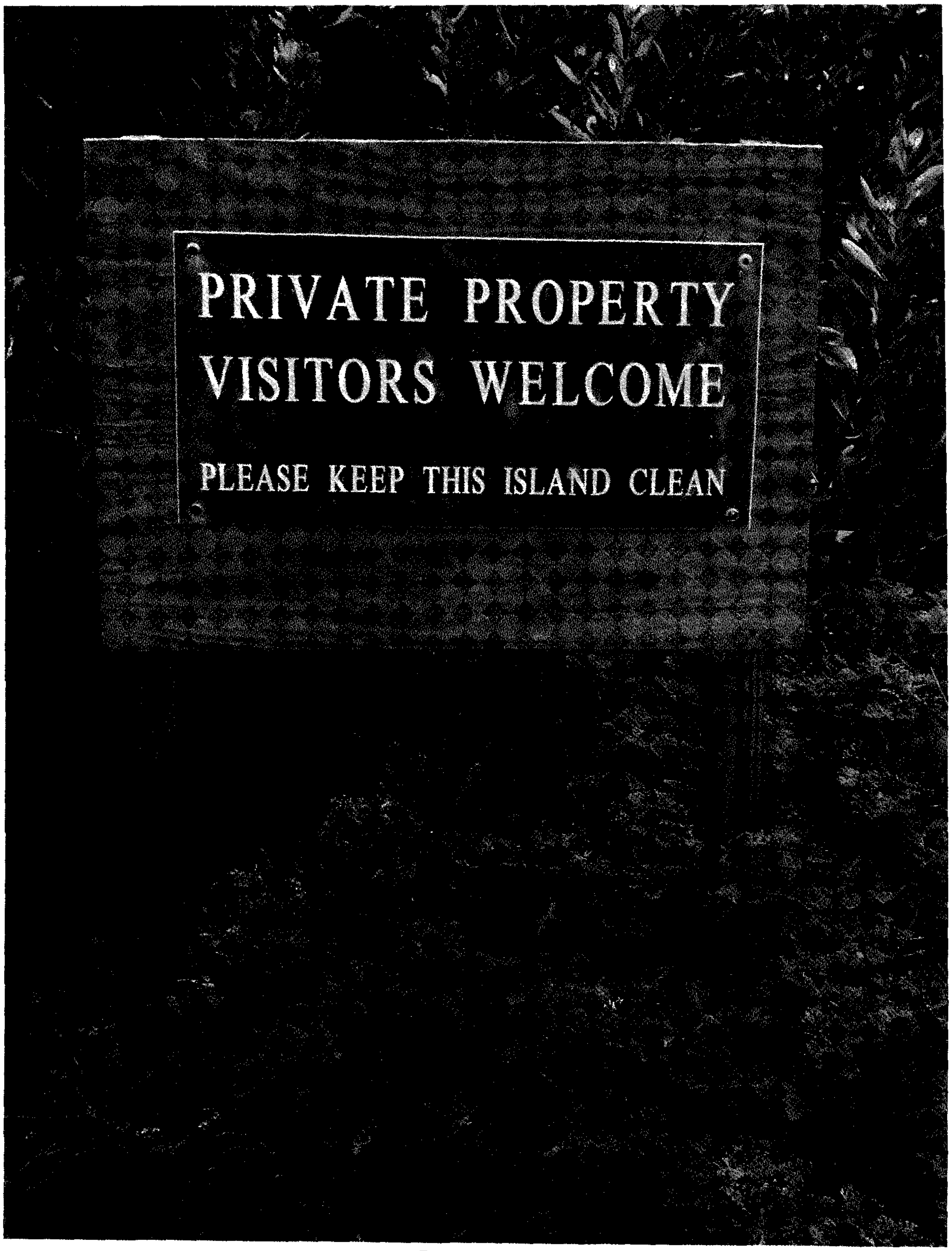

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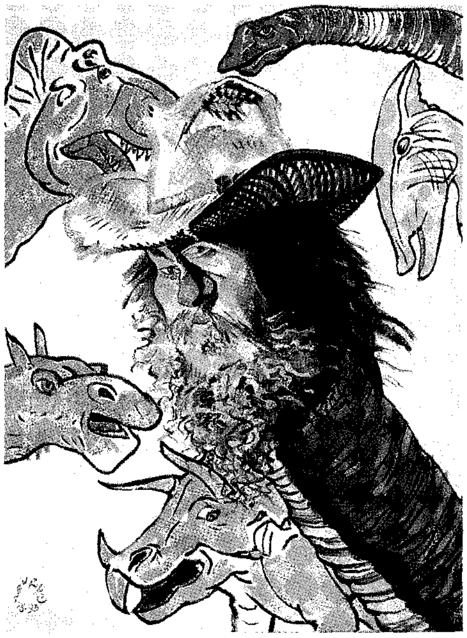
ANNALS OF SCIENCE

THE DINOSAUR HERETIC

A renegade paleontologist vexes colleagues even as he wins over the public and is at the center of the current outbreak of dinosaurmania.

BY TERENCE MONMANEY

YOUNG scientists usually nibble at the margins of their chosen field, but while the dinosaurologist Robert T. Bakker was still an undergraduate at Yale he went after ideas that encyclopedias blithely retailed as certainties. Among his targets for revision was the dinosaur archetype itself, the brontosaur—the pinheaded titan that was supposedly so ill adapted to life on land that it had to buoy itself in water to keep from collapsing. The first brontosaur remains were discovered almost a century before Bakker began working his way through the vast fossil collection of Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History, in the mid-sixties, and you would think that by then very little was left to say about everybody's all-time favorite extinct species.



From how dinosaurs "danced" to why they disappeared, Robert T. Bakker's ideas about the largest land animals ever are always surprising—and controversial.

PHILIP BURKE

After measuring and sketching the important brontosaur bones there—sometimes Bakker spent the night on an old couch between fridge-size femurs—he concluded from the structure and the heft of their tail, shoulders, and limbs that brontosaurs inhabited dry land. Their blunt elephantine feet would sink in mud or marshland like fence posts. Later, Bakker studied the maps of fossilized brontosaur trackways and, applying pendulum physics to the stride length (a technique worked out by another scientist), he estimated that these behemoths, weighing twenty to thirty tons, could jog. He also noticed that in one trackway the largest footprints (big enough for a child to take a bath in) seemed to gather around the smallest, and this told him that the adults had circled protectively around the calf, perhaps during an allosaur attack. Until Bakker, brontosaurs languished in swamps, doomed outsized monuments of reptilian isolation and torpor; now they crashed across savannas in organized herds, doting on their young.

No scientist has done more than Bakker to advance the view of dinosaurs as energetic, swift, bright-colored, cunning, persevering, supremely well adapted, socially complex—in sum, thrilling—animals. While that view reaches its most extravagant form in the fifty-six-million-dollar Steven Spielberg movie "Jurassic Park," due out in June, it has been a staple of PBS specials, many of them featuring Bakker, for nearly two decades, and he himself set it forth in a 1986 book, "The Dinosaur Heresies," a four-hundred-and-fifty-page work of original scholarship and keen popularization. The book is chockablock with his own illustrations, maps, charts, genealogical trees, and anatomical diagrams. His drawings—a snarling sabretooth, a dancing stegosaur, a swooping pterodactyl—are lively and playful, and appear to have been done by a precocious boy given to daydreaming about monsters. He knows of kids who cannot resist getting out the crayons when they see the illustrations. "I like that," he says. "A scientific treatise that is also a coloring book."

To dinosaur fans—especially children—Bakker is a celebrity, if not a kind of hero. Walking into a crowded museum dinosaur hall with Bakker is perhaps a little like walking into Niketown with Bo Jackson. Ogles and whispers follow him. He cuts an unmistakable figure. His hair is dark brown and is gathered into a ponytail that reaches his belt, his beard is approaching his belly, and he nearly always dresses as though he had just stepped out of a fossil bed: jeans tucked into scuffed boots, work shirt, many-pocketed field vest, and wide-brimmed white cowboy hat. You seldom see him hatless. Eating breakfast in a restaurant, he wears his hat. Seated in an airplane, he wears his hat.

Bakker is forty-eight, and lives in Boulder, Colorado, with his wife, Constance Clark, and their frequently televised dog. Bakker has no academic appointments. He supports himself and his field research chiefly by writing, leading expeditions, consulting, and lecturing; he gets as much as ten thousand dollars for a public talk, he says, and usually donates a third or more of that to a few small museums in Wyoming and to projects conducted by a handful of amateur paleontologists who work with him—his "students." In a two-week stretch in April, he addressed a packed hall of conventioneering science teachers in Kansas City (beginning "I'm not a paleontologist, but I play one on TV"); addressed a group of zoogoers and zoologists in New Orleans; was grounded for a few days with pneumonia compounded by jet lag; did some consulting with the model-makers at Dinamation, a dinosaur-robot company in Irvine, California; and delivered a public lecture on *Tyrannosaurus rex* at the National Geographic Society headquarters, in Washington, D.C.

The high demand for tickets to that lecture prompted the Society to book a second performance. Half an hour before the second show was due to start, he was already onstage warming up the house. He was dressed formally—the usual getup, plus a bolo tie with a large silver clasp. He wore his hat. A huge sketch pad rested on an easel. He paced back and forth, unmiked, exclaiming wonderful truths. He said that a former student of his had discovered a new, uncommonly large type of *Velociraptor* just last year in Utah—a dinosaur that Spielberg had uncannily put in "Jurassic Park" even before it was known to exist. Bakker described the *Utahraptor* find as a "giant Schwarzeneggerian fossil with martial-arts thingamabobs at the end of its claw," and quickly sketched it. Then he gave the drawing to a kid in the third row. He sketched other dinosaurs, treated other kids.

At the lecture's official starting time, he left the stage, and a young man from the Society stepped up and introduced him. He said that Bakker had received his undergraduate degree at Yale and his doctorate from Harvard, that he taught at Johns Hopkins University for eight years, and that he was considered "a visionary." Bakker returned, and delivered a pell-mell survey of, among other things, the evidence for the self-described heresy that he'll always be known for: the idea that dinosaurs were warm-blooded, and not, as had long been assumed, cold-blooded. In 1968, at twenty-three, he wrote, in his first scientific paper, that dinosaurs were not "sluggish," like reptiles, but "lived at a high physiological level"; the paper, "The Superiority of Dinosaurs," inverted the received wisdom. At the time, he was widely acknowledged to be the enfant terrible of dinosaurology; now that his beard is getting gray, his detractors say he is only terrible. Also back then, as both his admirers and his detractors seem to enjoy pointing out, he was preaching. Occasionally, he went to New York, occupied a corner on upper Broadway, and ranted on about salvation. "I favored the Old Testament and a certain sternness in regard to people's behavior," he says. He thinks it was the Yale *Daily News* that said he was "the Voice of Doom." His religious fervor, he suggests, has faded. Some years ago, he discovered Jewish blood in his Dutch roots, and he liked that; he says it helps explain his fondness for dialectic and shtick.

That night, Bakker said that in the storied dinosaur quarries of the American West, where paleontologists have been working for more than a century, countless discoveries remain to be made. "I teach these short courses for amateurs," he went on. "And every time I take a group out for five or six days somebody finds a new kind of dinosaur. All over the world, that's happening. Dinosaurs are exploding. New species are being found all the time." He projected a slide of a recently unearthed brachiosaur thighbone. Lying on the ground next to the fossilized bone was a young woman of roughly the same length—for scale. "One of the many uses we have in the field for dead graduate students," he said. "We have very little use for live graduate students. They're always whining. 'I can't get a job, I don't have a grant, yah-da-yah-da-yah-da.' " He ended by projecting a photograph that hints strongly at the birdlike essence of many dinosaurs, especially the colossal meat-eaters. It showed a desert groundbird holding a surprisingly large lizard in its beak—a delicious triumph of the warm-blood over the cold-blood. Think of *T. rex*, Bakker said, as a "ten-thousand-pound roadrunner from Hell." Afterward, questioners and autograph seekers mobbed him.

THE world's finest mounted brontosaur skeleton, at the American Museum of Natural History, in New York, stood fifteen miles from where Robert Bakker grew up, in Ridgewood, New Jersey. His father was an electrical engineer, his mother a homemaker. (They've retired to Florida.) Both parents have Dutch backgrounds. The family name is pronounced "Baker," but by the time Robert was a senior in high school he had dug into his origins, and was using the Dutch pronunciation, "Bocker." When I first met him, a couple of months ago, he looked familiar—not just from television but in a closeup way—and then I realized that he resembles one of the bemused and slightly sad Rembrandt subjects; with a beard up to his cheekbones, the milky skin around his eyes and his startling blue irises seem to emerge out of the dark like a portraitist's highlight. His only sibling, Donald, three years his senior, is a Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate and teaches high-school history on Cape Cod. The family's circumstances were solid middle-class suburban. He says he took trombone lessons from a principal in the Metropolitan Opera orchestra. Dinosaur fever struck him at the age of ten. "We thought he'd grow out of it," his brother recalls. In the second grade, he visited the Brooklyn Navy Yard and fell in love with ships. His boyhood reading included ample portions of Samuel Eliot Morison's fourteen-volume "History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II." Today, though he is a pacifist, he belongs to the United States Naval Institute. He wonders what dinosaurs and battleships have in common.

Bakker's parents are conservative Christians, and there wasn't an obscene utterance or a fleck of tobacco or a drop of alcohol allowed in the house. Mrs. Bakker led the boys in morning prayer before they went to school. On Sundays, the family spent hours in church services, church meetings, and Bible studies. His mother, Robert says, is a staunch creationist, and I once asked if they had ever clashed, because he's a believer in evolutionary theory—usually a thumb in God's eye. He said no.

His college preaching was just a sixties thing. "Part of the charismatic revival," he says. "Neo-Evangelical Protestantism." Beyond portraying the activity to me as a kind of street theatre, he has declined to talk about it. His father says that in the sixties Robert belonged to a "far-out" group called the God Squad.

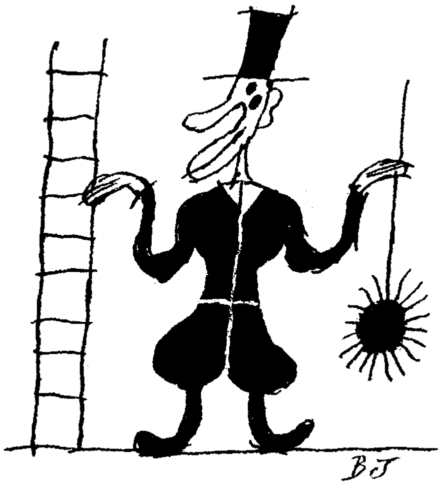
When Bakker got his induction notice, after college, he "sat down with the draft board in northern New Jersey," he recalls, and he goes on to say, "It was a hoot. They didn't like longhairs or draft resisters. But we had a long discussion, for about an hour, and I made an argument based on the Old Testament. They said O.K. I got a deferment for religious reasons. I was a conscientious objector." And, he hastens to add, a C.O. of the most extreme sort—one "who would not serve even in a noncombatant capacity."

I asked Bakker if *he* felt a conflict between his scientific and his religious beliefs. He suggested that it was possible to read the Old Testament in a way that did not render the study of paleontology invalid. "It's clear from a casual reading that Genesis wasn't meant to be a textbook of anatomy or physiology or geology," he said. "The origin of physical things was of little interest to the writers of the Old Testament. That's its bias—the physical body is not interesting. There are ten times as many verses on *loans* in the Old Testament."

For all his flamboyance—the hat, the win-you-over jokes, the media shows—Bakker is, it seems, something of an ascetic. The other day, he got up before dawn and worked on a long scholarly paper, and then he appeared on a drive-time radio talk show. People see the jeans and the beard and the ponytail and they think, Hippie. But he told me he had never smoked anything or drunk any alcohol; he also said that he practiced this self-denial for its own sake, and to set him apart. His trademark hair style may be inspired less by Woodstock than by Leviticus—the Old Testament's severest voice, and the one he mentions most often—which commands, "You shall not round off your hair from side to side, and you shall not shave the edge of your beard."

To hear Bakker reflect on his professional experiences or to read "The Dinosaur Heresies" is to gather that he does not think of science entirely as the open society it is said to be. He tends to see it as a closed order. It has an "obfuscatory priestly language designed to keep out hoi polloi," he said. It is made inert by "obscurantism" and dogma. And, he suggests, it punishes heretics.

STARTING in the eighteen-twenties, with the discovery of *Megalosaurus* fragments in Stonesfield, England, the complete or partial remains of thousands of individual dinosaurs have been found, and these fossils represent hundreds of species (no one knows the exact number), ranging from perhaps as much as eighty tons to several pounds. They were meat-eaters and plant-eaters, bipedal and quadrupedal, terrestrial, and perhaps even aerial. The earliest dinosaur fossils date back two hundred and thirty million years, to the Triassic Period, and the most recent are from the end of the Cretaceous Period, sixty-five million years ago—the time of the "great dying," when dinosaurs more or less abruptly disappeared. (The Jurassic Period was from two hundred and thirteen to a hundred and forty-eight million years ago.) All told, the dinosaurs lived for a hundred and sixty million years. In contrast, *Homo sapiens sapiens* has existed for a blink—a hundred thousand years.



Though dinosaurs dominated the animal kingdom longer than any other class of animals, the standard explanation for their success was that they had won by default: that if fully evolved mammals had been around, what with their brains, speed, social sophistication, and diversity, they would have outhustled, outmaneuvered—outclassed—the big, dumb dinosaurs. Early on, Bakker argued that dinosaurs did not deserve to be regarded as unsuccessful life-forms—one of evolution's crumpled early drafts. He said that mammals hadn't yet evolved beyond what he calls the "furball" stage, because of the dinosaurs. The dinosaurs suppressed mammals. The only niche left for a mammal was that of a tiny scamperer, whose high-pitched squeak and soft skittering made it inaudible to most dinosaurs (or such is Bakker's belief, based on an analysis of the fossilized impressions of dinosaur ear canals). And what enabled the dinosaurs to dominate, he said, was that they already possessed many of the advantages associated with mammals.

During his senior year at Yale, he was the Scholar of the House, an honor that freed him from coursework and left him free to poke around the museum. Curators and illustrators often portrayed quadruped dinosaurs as having a reptilian attitude—belly low to the ground and elbows everted, as though in mid-pushup—and Bakker believed that this depiction wasn't accurate. At the Peabody stood the mounted skeleton of a centrosaur, a horned dinosaur; it had erect, rhinolike hind limbs and sprawling, lizardlike forelimbs. For his research project, Bakker set out to show that the Creator was not so ambivalent. "I focused on the problem of the alignment of the forelimbs of dinosaurs," he recalls in "The Dinosaur Heresies." He goes on:

> My parents gave me a tiny handwound movie camera, and with Yale funds I bought the alligators and lizards that I kept in the museum basement. I'd lie on my stomach watching a lizard or 'gator walk around on an old rug, and built up a library of motion-analysis film of a dozen species. These filmings had their dangers. No three-foot 'gator was afraid of a Yale undergraduate, and I had to remember to move smartly when an open mouth filled the viewfinder.

Bakker's alligator held its elbows straighter than either a typical lizard or the Peabody's centrosaur. And that was odd, he writes, because "the horned dinosaur was supposed to be a much more advanced evolutionary design than the 'gator." (In effect, an alligator is the descendant of a dinosaur's uncle, and has changed very little over the ages.) The observation led him to study in fine detail the limb and shoulder anatomy of alligators—he killed his research specimen, then dissected it—and also of lizards, rhinos, and elephants. He eventually concluded that the forelimbs of horned dinosaurs, in particular, and quadrupeds, in general, were constrained by their anatomy to be straighter than those of alligators, and to swing with much greater freedom. The dinosaurs stood upright. Now they were higher, able to move around much more effectively: thus he elevated them literally and figuratively.

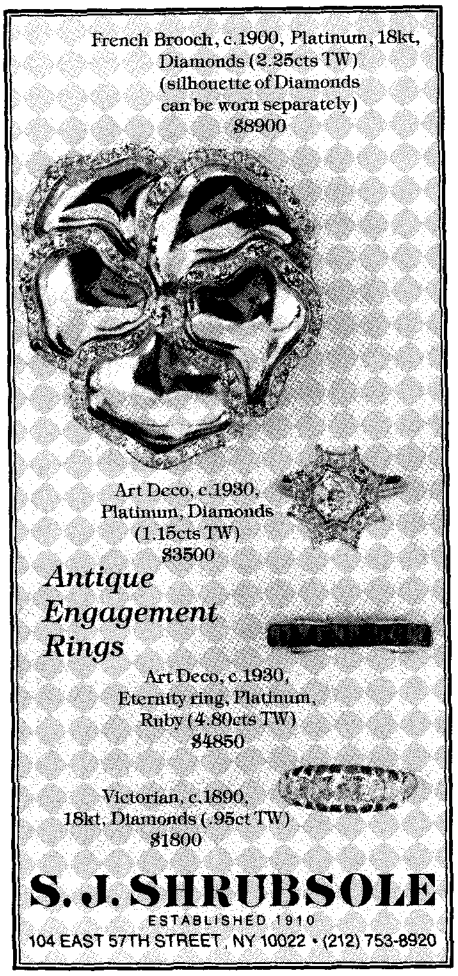
Drawing on his own experiments and studies, on the literature, and, undoubtedly, on conversations he had been having with his teachers, Bakker wrote in "The Superiority of Dinosaurs" that "the dinosaurs and their kin achieved locomotory advancements long before the mammals." He also created a new picture of these supposedly familiar beasts, saying that they were "fast, agile, energetic creatures."

One of Bakker's mentors at Yale was John S. McIntosh, a retired physics professor, who is also an authority on brontosaurs and other sauropods. He says, "I first met Bob when he was a freshman, and it was quite obvious that he was unusual. I've always had deep respect for his ideas, though I don't go as far as he goes. He certainly got people thinking. He was very largely responsible for getting dinosaurs back into the mainstream of paleontology."

Steven M. Stanley, who is a professor of paleobiology at Johns Hopkins University and is also a distinguished evolution theorist, was a graduate student at Yale when Bakker was there. Stanley says, "What I recognized was that he was as smart as a lot of the faculty, and smarter than the graduate students. The work he was doing had impact. People knew about it. I think some faculty and grad students may have been resentful of him. He's generally good-natured, has a marvellous sense of humor, but he's very straightforward and assertive. Comes on quite strong at times. And, what makes him even more difficult to listen to, he's usually right."

BITTER rumors hover around Bakker's name—for instance, that he is barred from the high academic echelons. Bakker joined the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences of Johns Hopkins in 1976, and taught there until 1984, when he moved to Colorado. The buzz is that he was denied tenure and told to go. But Bakker says that he left to be nearer the dinosaur beds. (He also says he doubled his income by going independent.) Stanley, his former colleague and a full professor at Hopkins, remembers Bakker's days at Hopkins with evident affection, and confirms that Bakker resigned before tenure was an issue, and yet, Stanley goes on, "people insist to my face that I'm a liar when I say he was not kicked out of here." Another persistent rumor, gravely related by a close associate of Bakker's, is that if he steps into the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History he'll be given the bum's rush. I called Nicholas Hotton III, a research paleontologist and curator of the museum, and asked him about that. He said, "There are some people who take a dim view of Bob around here. But then there are some people who'd like to hire him." Hotton added that Bakker had upset some researchers at the Smithsonian by "playing fast and loose with library facilities and specimens." Bakker's status as an outcast, it seems, is based partly on his being a naughty library patron.

Bakker exasperates his colleagues roughly as much as he delights his fans. He may bring some of the exasperation on himself. His current marriage is his fourth, and a man with three ex-wives is not likely to be the easiest per-



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son in the world to get along with. "He is mercurial to an extreme," one of his scientific supporters observes. "He will make commitments and not honor them. He'll say he's coming to give a talk, and they'll get a big crowd, and then he just doesn't show. You're allowed to be as iconoclastic as you want, but you've got to honor commitments to people. I love him dearly, but he can be infuriating."

Bakker's colleagues seem puzzled by what they take to be his unnecessary combativeness. The paleontologist Peter Dodson captured that perception in his review of "The Dinosaur Heresies" in *American Scientist*. Dodson begins by saying that Bakker has a "brilliant, original vision" and that "no one has thought more deeply about the biology of dinosaurs," but he goes on to say that Bakker "has a curious view of the process of science," and spells it out. "Whereas other scientists see farther because they stand on the shoulders of giants, he sees farther because he stands on the slain bodies of his opponents."

If that's an exaggeration—Bakker warmly acknowledges that many of his most important ideas have come from earlier scientists, like T. H. Huxley—the book is indeed quarrelsome, full of slashing references to "the scientific establishment," "the orthodoxy," "the Old Guard." It's the opinion even of Bakker's supporters that his somewhat contentious attitude, combined with an unseemly (to scholars) appetite for the spotlight and with a rebellious personal style—epitomized by what one acquaintance calls "that fucking hat"—has alienated the keepers of his professional reputation.

"He had such potential," one scientist says. "But he's his own worst enemy."

MONTES VENERIS

Thanks to Magellan's radar, we
Have maps of Venus and can see,
The *National Geographic* claims,
Whole mountainscapes, complete with names.

Beneath sulfuric-acid clouds
That never lift their poison shrouds
Heat like an oven's, turned to CLEAN,
Bakes Theia Mons, sere and serene.

Sif Mons, and Gula Mons, and Maat
And Sapas Mons are where it's at
For altitude, equatorwise.
Up north, on Ishtar Terra, lies

The Lakshmi Plenum; right next door
The Maxwell Montes upward soar
And boast a lava peak whose crest
Out-towers our Mt. Everest.

Heights innocent of snow or ice
Or hikers seeking edelweiss,
They rise through hellish murk and are
Subsumed within the evening star.

—JOHN UPDIKE

We were sitting shoulder to shoulder on a jet to Denver, and Bakker was making a purely scientific observation, but it carried the force of a parable. It concerned the pronghorn antelope, the fastest runner in North America. The pronghorn can so easily outrun a wolf or a coyote or a mountain lion, which are its only predators besides man, that it seems ridiculous, a bizarre extravagance. Evolution does not paint a lily, and it does not turbocharge a browser for no reason. Why so fast? It doesn't make sense, Bakker said, until you understand that fifteen thousand years ago the continent teemed with animals that are now gone. There were mammoths, giant sloths, giant wolves—and great cats, such as sabretooths and panthers, that ran like the wind. So when you see a pronghorn streak by, he said, you're seeing its response to an invisible predator. To know the pronghorn, know its oldest threats.

After Yale, Bakker stayed on at the Peabody for three years before going to Harvard, in 1971. He was elected to its Society of Fellows, which he describes as "a medieval and strange and rather murky organization." Quirks were tolerated, even encouraged. He went to meetings with a pet ferret in his satchel. He conducted studies on lizard metabolism—a natural subject for a scientist interested in the metabolism of dinosaurs, whose name means "terrible lizard." And he spent several seasons in Africa, studying not only fossil reptiles in the field and in museum collections but also wildlife.

The question he continued to pursue was at the time a fundamental one: Were dinosaurs cold-blooded or warm-blooded? Habitat preferences, reproduction modes, social behavior, intelligence, temperament, locomotion—what dinosaurs were really like in crucial ways—came down to whether they could regulate their own temperature. An example of the difference is predatory style. A cardinal warm-blooded trait is persistence. Warm-blooded creatures track and chase their prey; they have range and stamina; they are dogged; they seek. Predatory reptiles are patient. They wait and wait—then strike. An alligator, a Komodo dragon, or a python generally remains hidden until a meal happens by. Reptiles, conserving their energies, practice the cool ambush, not the hot pursuit.

Bakker, building his case brick upon brick, wrote that dinosaur limb anatomy and bone microstructure, which resembled those of large mammals, plus the trackway evidence of their fairly speedy travels, plus the overarching fact of their dominance, suggested warm-bloodedness. In addition, their rib cages were large, indicating big, active hearts and lungs—also like warm-bloods. And, in his most novel argument, he called attention to the balance of predators and prey. In a community of cold-bloods, predators are fairly common, but warm-blooded predators, which are constantly stoking their metabolism, are fairly rare; otherwise, they would eat themselves into famine. What Bakker found when he performed dinosaur censuses of rich fossil beds was that the predators were usually no more than ten per cent of the total population—a low, distinctly warm-blooded fraction.

Bakker's warm-blooded theory, which he presented in journal articles, at meetings, and in the press, so quickly influenced dinosaurology that a historian of science, Adrian J. Desmond, published a book on the subject, "The Hot-Blooded Dinosaurs," in 1976—the year Bakker got out of graduate school. In 1980, the American Association for the Advancement of Science held a symposium, which generated a book called "A Cold Look at the Warm-Blooded Dinosaurs." At times, the debate has had a Dadaist loopiness; the journal *Evolution* once published a refutation of a rebuttal of a critique of a paper. Bakker has been rather cavalier, saying that one opponent's argument was "a fatal non sequitur" and that others had indulged in "thermal semantics." By now, it seems that many scientists have scrambled for a middle ground. Some say that the smaller dinosaurs, the bipeds, the meat-eaters, and the big-brainers, were warm-blooded, but that the big plant-eaters were not. Others say that many dinosaurs were so big they stayed warm and acted warm-blooded—in effect, conceding that Bakker is right about dinosaur behavior but wrong about the physiological mechanism. Even that concession could be interpreted as a huge victory for Bakker's cause. He calls it "a copout."

Back in 1975, Bakker laid out his thinking in a *Scientific American* article, "Dinosaur Renaissance," which made the question of warm-bloodedness widely public—and also touched off a scandal. Among other things, Bakker discussed the possibility that birds are the living descendants of dinosaurs. That had been suggested a century before, and it was then being revived by John H. Ostrom, a Yale professor of geology and an eminent dinosaur specialist. In his article, Bakker presented his former professor's idea about birds-as-living-descendants, and clearly attributed it to Ostrom. Still, Ostrom hit the roof, because, he says, he had not yet announced his findings. "I asked Bob to refrain from publishing these particular ideas until my work appeared," Ostrom recalled to me. What made matters worse, apparently, was that a newspaper item mistakenly credited Bakker with that crucial idea. Then, months later, two Harvard paleontology professors published a brief note in a professional organ, the *Society of Vertebrate Paleontology News Bulletin*, saying, in so many words, that Bakker had stolen Ostrom's work and peddled it to the press as his own.

One of Bakker's advisers was Stephen Jay Gould, a professor of geology and zoology at Harvard, a popular writer, and, like Bakker, no stranger to public controversy. "It was an awfully harmful charge. It could have destroyed Bob's career," he told me. Gould saw the accusation as a direct attack on "one of the most brilliant men to have arisen in this field in a couple of generations." He added, "I can't think of anything in my own early career that gave me so much insight into how the invisible-college aspect of science operates."

An enraged Bakker threatened to sue for libel. In the fall of 1975, the concerned parties—Bakker, Gould, Bernhard Kummel (Bakker's closest adviser), the two paleontology professors, and Ostrom—met on the Harvard campus to air the charges. As a result of that session, a subsequent issue of the *News Bulletin* contained a retraction, vindicating Bakker of plagiarism and apologizing for the error.

"I was upset, of course," Ostrom says. He recalls Bakker as "very bright, extraordinarily perceptive, talented—but undisciplined." Ostrom says he once told Bakker when he was an undergraduate, " 'Bob, you will always win more converts by understating your position than by overstating it.' But he never heard the message. Never has. His tactic, his philosophy, is to overwhelm. Fine, but there will always be a few people who say, *I don't buy that.*" Reflecting on the Harvard scandal, he said, "All of us were sorry about what happened."

"Ruffled feathers happen all the time," Bakker says. "People get jealous. I don't blow the whistle often. There are so many little things you could feel slighted about, so many little insults you could react to. But this one, because it was in a written record—I said, 'No. You've got to retract that.' These various tenured professors harrumphed and frumphed and said they wouldn't. But Bernie Kummel and Steve Gould and some others said, 'You can't do this. Just because the guy's a graduate student you can't publish unsubstantiated and incorrect charges. You can't do it.' I was impressed by Bernie and Steve. They didn't think about it twice. They went up against their tenured colleagues in other departments because a student had been slandered. That doesn't happen often. I mean, tenured faculty are like feudal lords. At one point, Bernie was staring at one of these other tenured professors, and he said, 'This is just not gentlemanly conduct.' And he meant it in the finest sense—that there is a code of fairness you must observe."

WHEN Bakker advises the paint shop at Dinamation, he tells the artists to get out the colors. Dinosaurs have long been draped in shades of gray and brown, but he dresses them like flower children. Brontosaurs with zebra stripes, *Velociraptors* streaked with canary and cardinal, a *Triceratops*' crest with concentric circles of red, gold, and green—a tie-dyed crown. These colorations represent pure guesswork, since no pigmented fossils exist, but he sees no harm in speculating. One day, while he was working clay into the eye socket of an six-foot-four-inch *Utahraptor* model in Dinamation's prototype studio, I asked him how he justified his color schemes.

"In nearly all dinosaurs, the eyeball's gigantic," he said. "It fits tightly in the skull. You can actually see the imprint of the eyeball on the fossil. The optic nerve is gigantic. You see the hole where it enters the brain case. They were very visual animals. And they were certainly color-sighted. Their direct descendants, birds, are all color-sighted. Alligators and crocodiles are color-sighted. Lizards are distant relatives—they're mostly color-sighted. Dinosaurs must have seen in color. Which means all the paintings and drawings I grew up with were wrong. They show dinosaurs in dull colors. Dull colors are the rule for color-blind animals, like elephants and hippos and rhinos. Most mammals are color-blind. Primates are an exception. If you go to the primate house in the zoo, that's where you see bright colors. A lot of bright colors in the faces of monkeys—a social sexual signal."

Most significant, he said, was the likelihood that birds are descendants of dinosaurs, and that birds both see in color and sport colors. He went on, "It's pretty rare to find a species of bird where males and females are dull-colored all year round. Even things like crows—if you get them in the right light, you'll see they have structural colors in their feathers: a green or blue sheen. Hawks and eagles often have bright-yellow or orange feet and marks on their faces." For him, he said, "the penny dropped only about six years ago—that dinosaurs *must* have had a color evolution like birds."

Oddly, perhaps, considering the input Bakker has had at Dinamation, the life-size, rubberized, computerized servomechanistic models that the company rents to museums, zoos, and aquariums have a way of reinforcing the old view of dinosaurs; they move their necks and open their mouths and roar, but they go nowhere. They are profoundly un-Bakkerian. One scientist, a leader in dinosaur-locomotion studies, recently estimated that he could outrun a *T. rex.* If Bakker is correct, though, the man's a goner, because Bakker places *T. rex's* top speed at over thirty miles an hour. A *Triceratops*, the three-horned vegetarian, would appear to be so heavily armored it could hardly move, and for a long time it was depicted as a dim-witted cud-chewer that couldn't get out of its own way. In Africa, Bakker saw white rhinos and black rhinos charge, animals roughly half the size of a *Triceratops*, and he was not convinced that today's big mammals are the last word on speed. When Bakker imagines a *Triceratops*, he feels the ground shaking and hears thunder and sees dust flying. He draws it in full gallop—all four of its feet off the ground, as much as five tons of armored beast bearing down at thirty miles an hour. He has handled and studied fossilized *Triceratops* limbs, and felt the mass of the supporting ankles and the bulging shins. "I always come away from handling a *Triceratops* humerus with a sense of awe," he writes in a 1987 essay, "The Return of the Dancing Dinosaurs." He goes on, "The greater strength of the *Triceratops* at every joint is to me very persuasive evidence that this dinosaur had broken out of the adaptive limits we see today."

THE generally accepted date for the disappearance of dinosaurs—sixty-five million years ago—defines the boundary between the Cretaceous and the Tertiary Periods. The event was not the first, not the only, not even the greatest episode of mass extinction—that occurred ages earlier, at the end of the Permian, when thousands of species of marine invertebrates and reptiles were wiped out—but it was the most dramatic, in that it eliminated an entire class of animals, including the largest land dwellers ever. Today, the dinosaur-extinction theory that scientists favor says that an asteroid or a comet crashed into Earth; that the collision kicked up dust, ignited firestorms, and triggered volcanic eruptions; and that the choked atmosphere blocked sunlight, chilling the planet and killing plants and, eventually, dinosaurs. Earthquakes, tidal waves, and acid rain might also have made life difficult.

The impact theory, first proposed in 1980, inspired the nuclear-winter scenario—the idea that nuclear war would plunge Earth into a similar deadly chill. And it is increasingly supported by geological data, including a seemingly worldwide sedimentary dusting of sixty-five-million-year-old iridium, which is an element found chiefly in asteroids and volcano ejaculate, and an enormous sixty-five-million-year-old crater on the coast of Yucatán. Policymakers and millennarians are considering building a missile system whose main purpose would be to defend Earth from some such future collision.

A sweeping dinosaur theory with vivid apocalyptic overtones sounds like just the thing to buff Bakker's bolo. But you won't hear the old Voice of Doom carrying on about a killer asteroid. He says the idea is "hokum." He does not dispute the notion that an asteroid may have hit Earth around the time the dinosaurs disappeared; he just says that it wouldn't have mattered much. He believes this partly because of the persistence of frogs in the fossil record.

One afternoon, as we sat in the lobby of Dinamation, I asked him to explain.

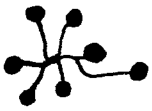
"The fact is, dinosaurs were only a tiny minority of the land fauna," he said. "Maybe one per cent, maybe two. And yet only the dinosaurs went extinct at that time. Really, nothing else went extinct on land then.

"If you whack the earth today with a meteorite, the cosmic zap, the great male fist of God, you can make a prediction. This is how the dying will go: You're going to lose frogs in enormous numbers. They have no hibernation response. They're just going to die. That's also true of most snakes and lizards. Then, later, you will lose the larger animals. It takes longer to kill a big animal by chilling. You can see elephants out in the Bronx Zoo in December. They can take the cold. They have a high metabolism.

"The asteroid theory predicts a schedule of death, a schedule of victims, that is absolutely the reverse of what happened. There were thousands of species of tropical frogs and tropical turtles when this asteroid hit, and they weren't affected in the least."

Bakker went on to say that several years ago he sat down with Luis Alvarez, a distinguished chemist, a Nobel laureate, and a major proponent of the asteroid theory. (Alvarez died in 1988.) "I said, 'Luis, there was no extinction of frogs at the end of the Cretaceous. None at all.' He'd never heard this. 'The lizards didn't die. The little turtles didn't die. The crocodiles didn't die. All these temperature-sensitive animals didn't die.' He thought for a while, then said, 'Young man, I'm giving you the stars and you're giving me frogs?’ Then he left. He didn’t want to hear about frogs.”

In Bakker’s view, what did the dinosaurs in was pestilence and plague, carried across new land bridges that were created by draining seas and shifting continents. “Land bridges appear all over the world at the end of the Cretaceous,” he said. “The animals that would move fastest across land bridges are big. And the ones that would move most slowly are small—frogs and salamanders and toads. What would happen if you had fifty species of land animal suddenly meeting one another? You’re mixing thousands of diseases.



“Talk to anybody in a zoo. Or go to an airport and say you want to bring in a live monkey, a live parrot, and a bunch of lizards from Burma. They’ll be quarantined. Why do customs officials and zookeepers and wildlife managers know this, and paleontologists don’t? Hardly any paleontologist pays any attention to introduced diseases. When faunas mix, things die. Historians learned that long ago.

“Paleontologists are very fond of invoking climate: ‘When climate changes, the plants change, and when the plants change, the plant-eaters change, and when the plant-eaters change, the meat-eaters change.’ That’s what I was taught. But it’s not true. The climatically sensitive animals, like frogs, are the most stable through evolutionary time. Astonishing. Crocodiles die in cold water long before it freezes. They just lose coördination and drown. They’re very climate sensitive, and yet crocodiles have been immune to mass extinction. Go down to Louisiana today and you’re still in the Cretaceous. Soft-shelled turtles. Alligators. Aquatic salamanders. All these animals were around in the Cretaceous. And they’re still around! This data’s been around since 1880 that crocodiles and turtles and frogs are very stable and dinosaurs and mammoths and sabre-toothed cats are very unstable and suffer extinction. That’s a wonderful paradox. Why have we ignored it?”

IN Michael Crichton’s ingenious, megaselling novel “Jurassic Park,” a wealthy businessman gets some genetic engineers to make real dinosaurs, and just when he’s about to open the world’s first dinosaur theme park, on an island off Costa Rica, the dinosaurs prove uncontrollable, and the moneygrubbers and the technicians become dinosaur chow. The people who survive are nice. Of course, the moldiest theme in science fiction is that if you tamper with Nature she’ll kick your butt. Crichton brings it up to date by warning of the dangers of unregulated genetic-engineering experiments; amazingly, even dragging that anvil, the story can make you miss your subway stop.

The hero—he saves the children, helps alert the armed forces, and escapes with his lovely assistant—is a dinosaur expert named Alan Grant. The character seems to be a composite, and one of Crichton’s models has to have been Bakker. Like Bakker, Grant is a bearded paleontologist associated with a Colorado university, as Bakker used to be; a proponent of warm-blooded dinosaurs; a man with “little patience for the academics,” from whom he distances himself “in dress and behavior”; the author of a popular dinosaur book, which he illustrated himself; and a figure instantly recognizable to young dinosaur fans.

Even so, Bakker’s influence is more intellectual than literary: Crichton’s dinosaurs are wonderfully Bakkerian. In the novel’s most harrowing episode, smallish raptor dinosaurs pursue their human prey like a wolf pack. They break windows, open doors, track odors, give long chase. They possess stamina and intelligence; they embody doggedness. Clearly, these are not reptiles. Without Bakker’s view of things, Jurassic Park might have been a far different place—full of cold-blooded suspense, perhaps, as opposed to warm-blooded action.

The paleontologist who bears the strongest resemblance to the character of Grant is John R. Horner, the curator of paleontology at Montana State University’s Museum of the Rockies, in Bozeman. In the late seventies, Horner discovered mounds containing duckbill-dinosaur eggshell fragments and infant remains at a few sites in northwestern Montana. The mounds were nests, and the nests were often situated in vast colonies, suggesting an unexpectedly high degree of social organization. Sometimes Horner found adult and juvenile bones in a single nest, and he

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saw in this mingling of generations a decidedly unreptilian instinct—nurturing. Thus, duckbill adults, and those of other dinosaurs, came to be seen as "caring." One duckbill genus was named *Maiasaura*—"good mother lizard." Horner's discoveries, hailed in the press and chronicled in books, including one in 1988 called "Digging Dinosaurs," by Horner and the writer James Gorman, made Horner a celebrity. In 1983, he had to hire a public-relations specialist to handle his schedule.

Crichton's protagonist, though he bears some resemblance to Bakker, digs for duckbills in Montana and has made major contributions to dinosaur sociology. And, also like the Horner portrayed in books and magazines (I've never met him), he drinks beer, listens more than he talks, tends toward the reclusive, and prefers hard field work to flighty theorizing. A model can't be blamed for an artist's crude rendering, so it's not Horner's fault that Crichton created both a stock Westerner and a stock scientist. It's interesting to speculate whether "Jurassic Park" would have been such a hit if its hero were, say, a ponytailed, teetotalling, prickly, hypertalkative, Old Testament-spouting, in-your-face Eastern intellectual with a longing to dazzle and a passion for theory.

Bakker and Horner have known each other for years, and, to hear Bakker tell it, they get along fine. In fact, Bakker ranks Horner as one of the three most influential field paleontologists in North America—along with Philip Currie, of the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology, in Drumheller, Alberta, and himself. Curiously, Bakker makes no mention of Horner in "The Dinosaur Heresies," although the remarkable duckbill-egg excavations were under way in time to be written about.

In "Digging Dinosaurs" Horner mostly agrees with Bakker's ideas about warm-bloodedness. He calls Bakker a "crusader and gadfly," whose ideas "have challenged prevailing paleontological thinking." And he says, "Not everybody in paleontology agrees with Bakker, but I think he has been a spur to more and better research. Out-of-the-way fields such as vertebrate paleontology can grow sleepy and accumulate dust like museum cellars, but not if Robert Bakker is around." And yet the journalist Don Lessem, in his book "Dinosaurs Rediscovered," shows Horner chafing at his reputation as a mere "fossil finder" while Bakker gets the glory. "I'm the guy who digs them up, Bob Bakker's the guy who figures them out," Horner tells Lessem "with considerable irritation." As it happens, Horner won the assignment of technical adviser to Spielberg's "Jurassic Park" team.

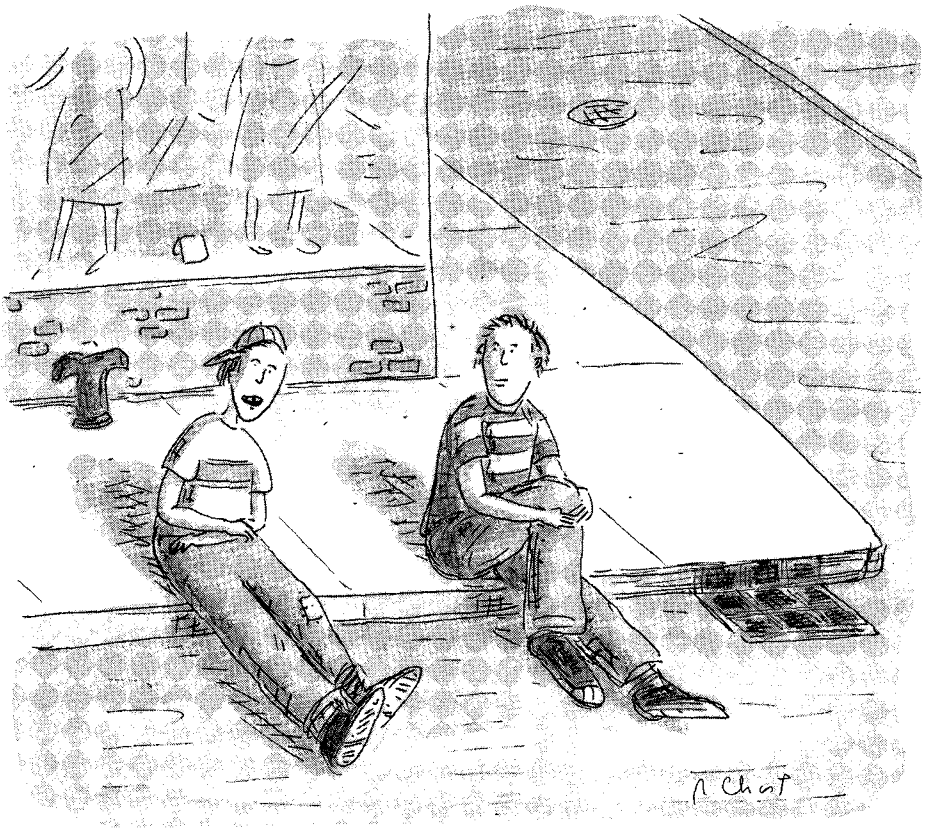
But a team of hackers and artists at Sega, a Japanese video-game company, is developing a game based on "Jurassic Park," and Bakker has been helping them. Sega's game—it won't be released until July—apparently picks up where the book and the movie end. It puts you in Jurassic Park after the dinosaurs have run amok, and the object seems to be to capture the remaining dinosaur eggs out from under the beasts' noses, presumably so you can then raise your own dinosaurs—an imaginative premise, given the horrors they just inflicted.

Recently, as part of his ongoing dinosaur tutorial, Bakker gave the Sega crew an anatomy lesson at their office, in San Carlos, California, south of San Francisco. He used a chicken from a Chinese market—recently killed and with its head and appendages intact. It rested on a silver platter on a chair. Bakker, seated, carefully snipped at the skin with scissors, exposing muscles, tendons, ligaments. Among the huddled observers was a young girl. "Eeww," she said.

For the image of a sprinting dinosaur to be believable, Bakker told them, the leg action has to be correct, down to the toes. He said the toes extend and spread out as the leg reaches forward, and then clench in midstride. Bakker swung a leg through its range of motion—a *T. rex* order of proportions, via *Gallus domesticus*. The toes, yanked by opposing tendons, automatically opened and closed. A computer animator said, "Cool. That'll help a lot."

"Eeww," the girl said.

Notice the slight triangle of skin between the toes, Bakker said, adding, "That shows up in dinosaur footprints." He pointed to the joint between drumstick and thigh, which had no patella. In a few of the team's early sketches, he said, his voice rising in mock outrage, he thought he saw knee-



"I'm going to run away and join the circus. Not one of those big, tacky ones—something more European and intimate."

caps. "Dinosaurs don't have kneecaps!"

A chicken wing, he said, is not all that far removed from a dinosaur claw. At the wingtip, you can make out a fused bone—a relic of two fingers, he said. Someone asked if a dinosaur could extend and turn its hand palm up—a question that would help program the image of a raptor, say, shovelling a genetic engineer into its mouth. "Oh, no," Bakker said. "They can't do that. Hardly any animals can turn their palms up. We're one of the few animals in the world that can." He went on to the ears—little flaps tight against the skull. You'd find a flat ear like that on a plant-eating dinosaur, he said, which had much less need for the more acute three-dimensional hearing that outstuck ears provide. A meat-eater must have had a different ear, he said. "It would face forward. Which it does in owls. You expect meat-eaters to—"

"Depth perception," a guy said.

"Exactly. It makes sense. I don't make these things up."

Initially, Bakker was brought in just to advise, but he proved so captivating that the team put him in the CD-ROM version of the game. A few weeks ago, they videotaped him as he delivered dozens of dinosaur sound-bites. In the game, if you're in a jam and you need some information, you call up Bakker; his hatted head appears on the screen—your personal paleontology guru—and what he tells you just might help you win. Bakker loves the venue. "Do you know how many millions of kids will learn something about dinosaurs because of this game?" he asks. Around Sega, they don't take themselves too seriously, but they see their "Jurassic Park" as an answer to the charge that their products only rot a kid's brain. In any event, it appears to be the first video game starring an important scientist as himself.

IT was a physicist, Max Planck, who said, "A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it." I found what may be striking evidence of that theory of intellectual evolution one weekday morning last month, when I accompanied Bakker to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. School kids swarmed, and a high-pitched recess clamor echoed in the great, solemn rooms. Kids pointed in Bakker's direction as discreetly as they could, and there was much wide-eyed hand-over-mouth whispering.

A middle-aged man approached. "Are you Robert Bakker?" he said, extending his hand.

"Yes," Bakker said, shaking it.

"I've used your films in class. I teach high-school geology."

"Whereabouts?"

"Northern New Jersey."

"I grew up in Ridgewood!"

"Well, thank you," the man said, and walked away.

We stopped for a few moments at the exhibit on *Dimetrodon*, the fin-backed reptile that predated the dinosaurs. It was represented by a nearly complete fossil skeleton, alligator-size, displayed in a shoulder-high case. Bakker has a reputation among his colleagues as a showoff, all publicity and no lonely searching. And yet, he told me, he has personally measured and drawn every *Dimetrodon* specimen in the world. The plaque says that the *Dimetrodon* is "a primitive, mammal-like reptile," and says little else, as if either you get it or you don't. But this is not the "Mona Lisa"—it needs help. Bakker shook his head. "See, this misses the ecological context. This is all ancestor worship." Then he acted out a stern pedagogical encounter. "Why is this object important?" he intoned. Whining, he answered, "Because it's the ancestor of mammal-like reptiles." Then he reverted to his normal demeanor. "No. This is the world's first top predator. Before this, you can't identify an animal that's strong enough to kill and eat anything else. The first king of beasts. Ecologically, a big deal. Does the plaque tell you that? No. And look at the sail. There are three or four living species of lizard with a sail as big as that. It's always bigger in the males. It's used for broadside display." The membranous skin on *Dimetrodon's* sail was probably boldly patterned or brightly colored, he said. "A wonderful animal."

The centerpiece of the dinosaur hall was a gathering of mostly Jurassic fossil skeletons: a grand diplodocus, with its long, cherry-picker neck and sweeping

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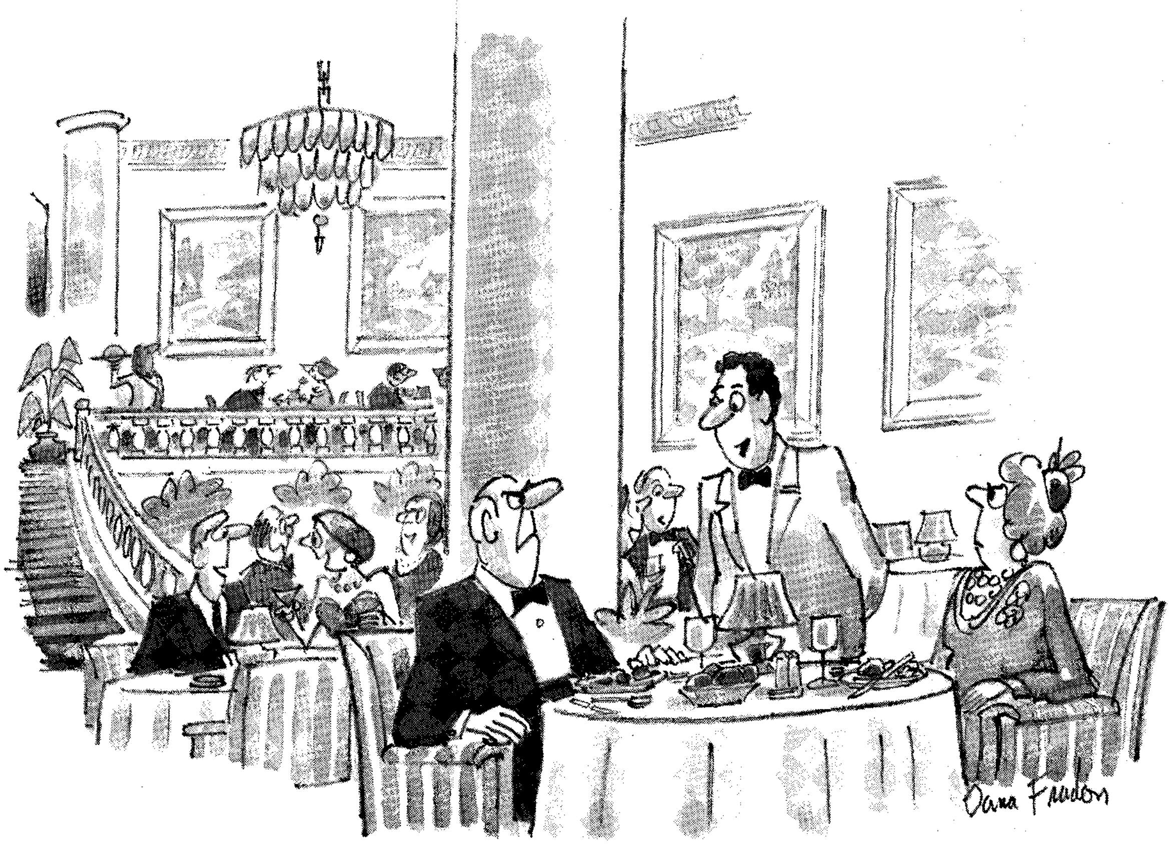


"Sorry, sir, but none of our food is very good. It's the chef's way of punishing the rich."

• •

tail; a rhino-size plated stegosaur; and a few waist-high and knee-high creatures. If he worked for the museum's marketing department, Bakker said, he would post a big banner that read "The Real Jurassic Park." He was here to view the allosaur, a sort of scaled-down *T. rex*, all haunch and jaw. "This is the defining *Allosaurus* specimen, the topotype," Bakker said. "It has an injured scapula, either bitten or gored—see that funny growth around the middle of the shoulder blade? It's adult, not big. Maybe pushing three-quarters of a ton."

We stopped at a sign on dinosaur-temperature control. Warm-blooded or cold-blooded? The Smithsonian, it turns out, was enemy territory, a redoubt of inertial homeothermy—the theory that dinosaurs, though metabolically cold-blooded, were so large that they held the little heat they generated and thus gained the advantages of warm-bloodedness.

"Oh, no!" Bakker shrieked, like a distressed damsel. It became apparent that he was not having much fun.

So you don't want to listen to this?

"I've heard it a thousand times," he said.

Why is it here if it's not true?

"Because this is standard doctrine, and it has got to be defended: 'Dinosaurs were successful because they were big and the climate was warm.' That's all you have to know! Big—it was warm. Big, tropics. Big, tropics. Bigtropics-bigtropicsbigtropics."

I read aloud from the text. *The dinosaurs' bigness probably helped them conserve heat.*

"But that's true no matter what your metabolism. The bigger you are, the less rapidly you'll lose heat."

Their capacity for prolonged strenuous activity would have been limited more by their size and anatomy than by their ability to use oxygen.

"That's a nonsense statement. Prolonged strenuous activity—maximum aerobic exercise, right? That's limited by only two things, lungs and heart. And we know that dinosaur lungs and hearts were avian." A bird's heart, he said, generally has twice the aerobic capacity of a human being's and almost twenty times that of a lizard's.

Warm-blooded animals use oxygen more effectively than cold-blooded animals.

"That's incorrect," he said, sounding a little steamed. Oxygen utilization by cold-bloods was part of his doctoral research.

. . . allows them greater endurance . . .

"Absolutely wrong."

Thus birds and mammals are more continuously active.

"They're more continuously active because they have larger hearts and lungs."

Maintaining constant high body temperature is very expensive.

"That's true."

In fact—

"Oh-oh."

In fact, dinosaurs could enjoy the advantages of high and constant body temperature "on the cheap." Because of their enormous bulk dinosaurs retained the heat generated by normal, everyday activity, such as walking. They did not need to add to it by processes that required additional food, as birds and mammals do.

"Now, wait a minute."

Perhaps that is why so few kinds of dinosaurs were small.

"Ha!" He pointed to the menagerie mounted in front of us. "The diplodocus—granted, that's enormous. The rest of the guys, they're cow-size. That guy over there, on the wall, that's an adult *Thescelosaurus*. Looks like fifty, maybe sixty pounds. And all the really early dinosaurs—the ancestors of these animals—were small. Coyote-size."

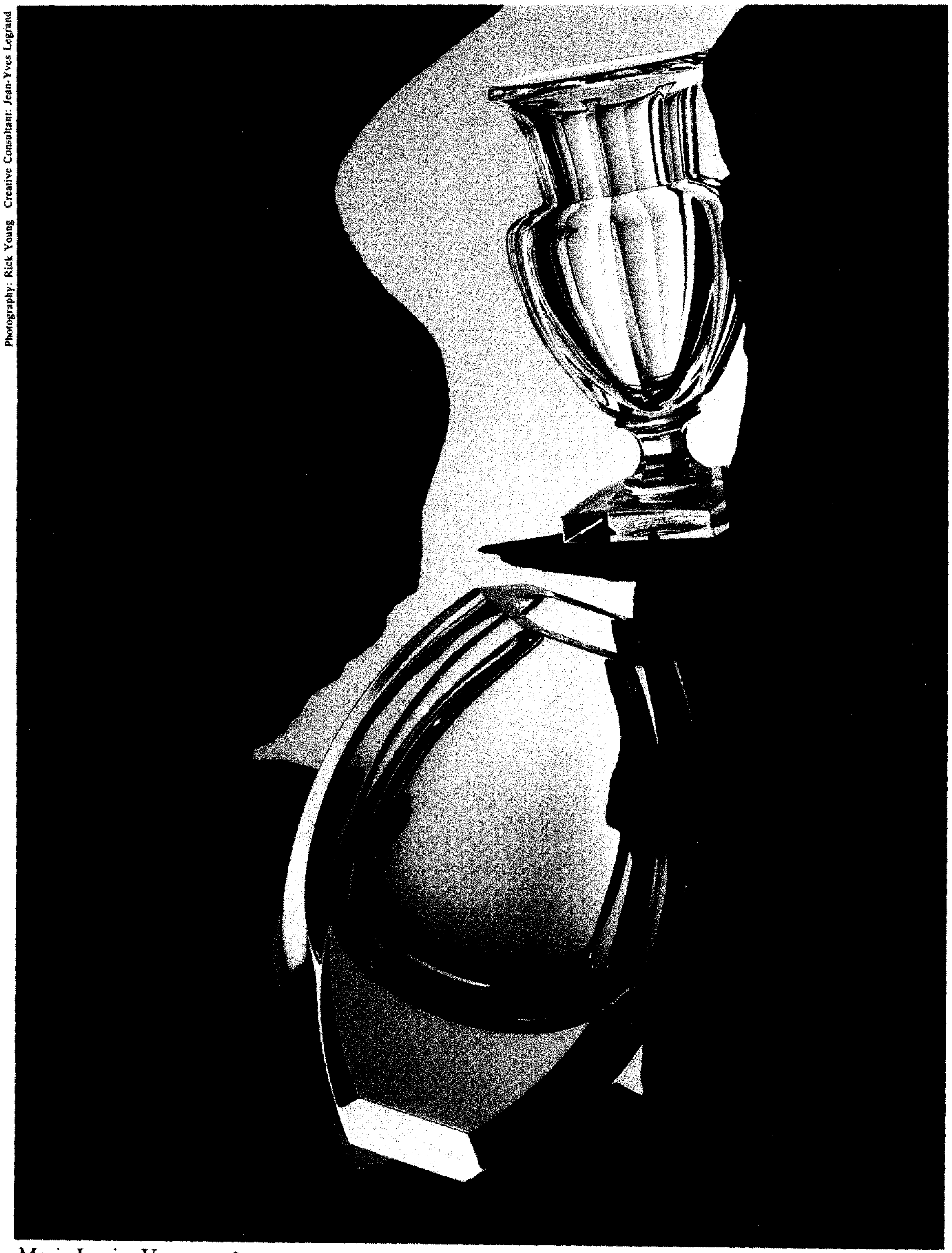
Small dinosaurs would still have depended mostly on external sources of heat, as do living reptiles and baby birds.

Now Bakker was laughing hysterically. "I don't know where they got the idea that baby birds are cold-blooded."

Did he find this irritating?

A pained expression passed over his face, and then he said, "I'm used to it." ♦

Photography: Rick Young Creative Consultant: Jean-Yves Legrand



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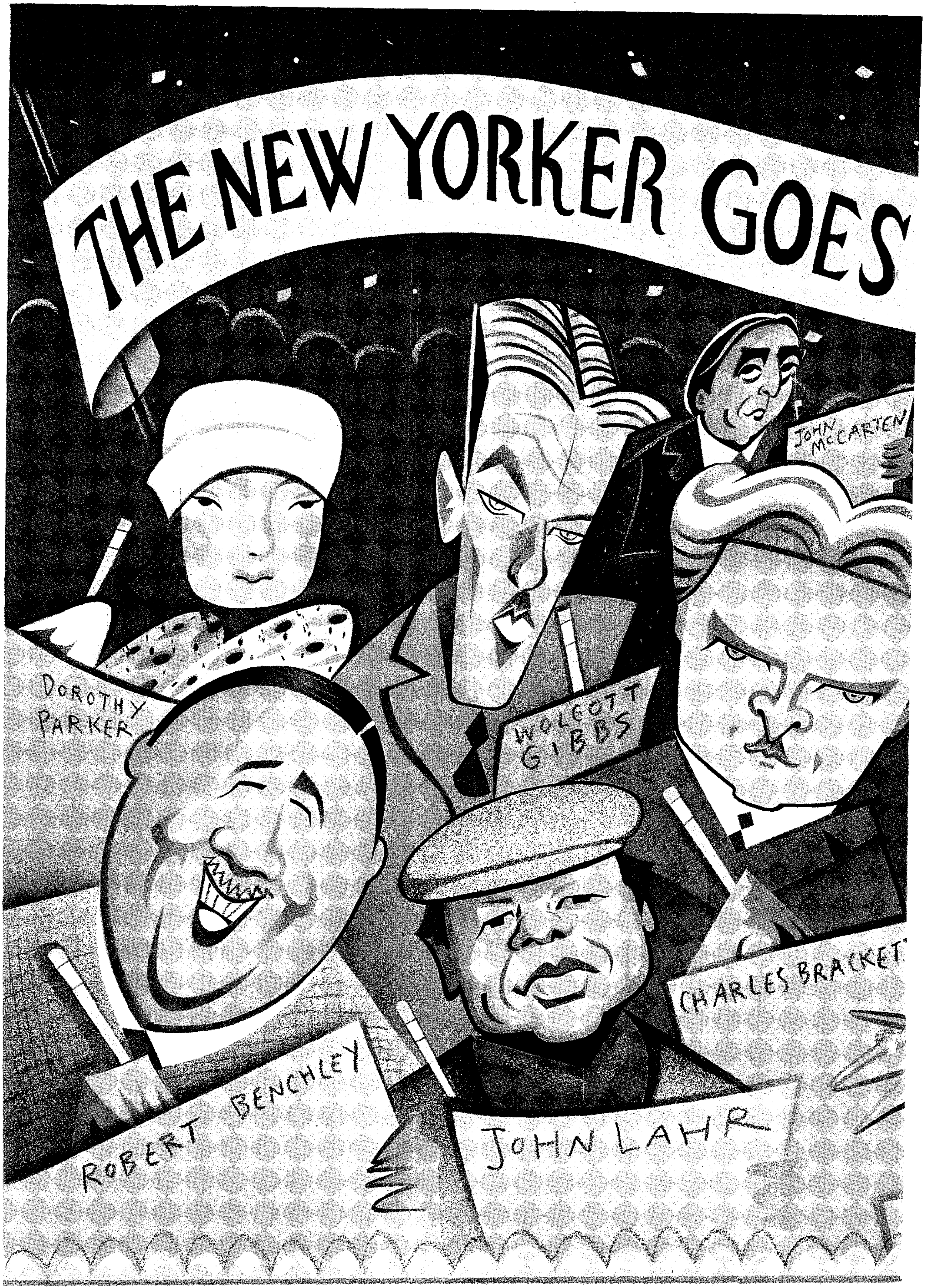
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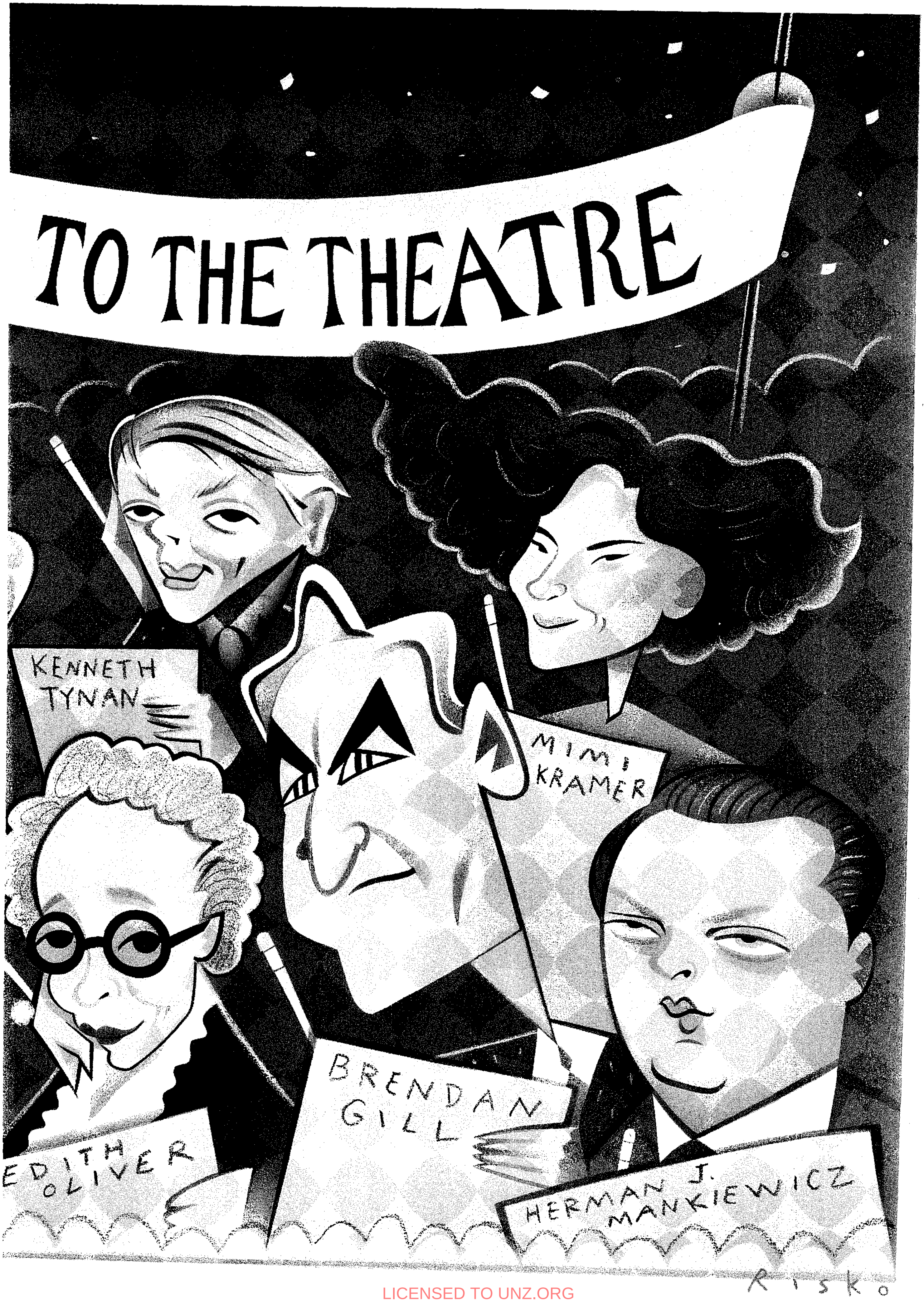

TO THE THEATRE
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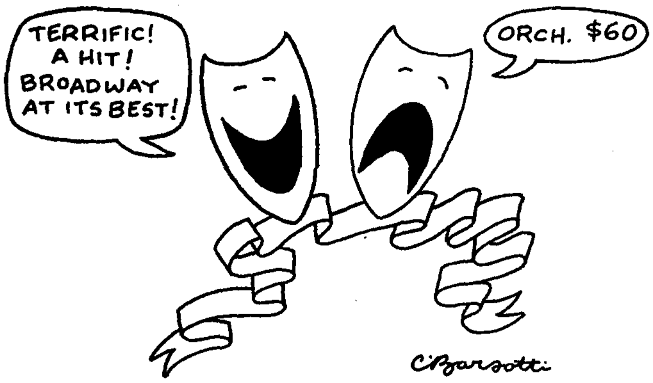
LIGHT FANTASTIC

As Broadway begins its second hundred years, The New Yorker celebrates the playground of the twentieth century's momentum.

BY JOHN LAHR

WHEN *The New Yorker* first hit the stands, in 1925, there were two hundred and twenty-eight shows on Broadway. Although the number of theatres nationwide had dropped from fifteen hundred in 1910 to fewer than seven hundred by 1925, the theatre business in New York, like the economy, was booming. *The New Yorker*—which was designed by a former actor, Rea Irvin—gave the city, and Broadway in particular, the shellac of high style. The magazine's offices were less than two blocks east of Times Square, but its proximity to Broadway life has always been more than geographical. *The New Yorker* and its writers were part of the imaginative urban renewal of the city, adding to Broadway's buoyant and proliferating cosmopolitan climate.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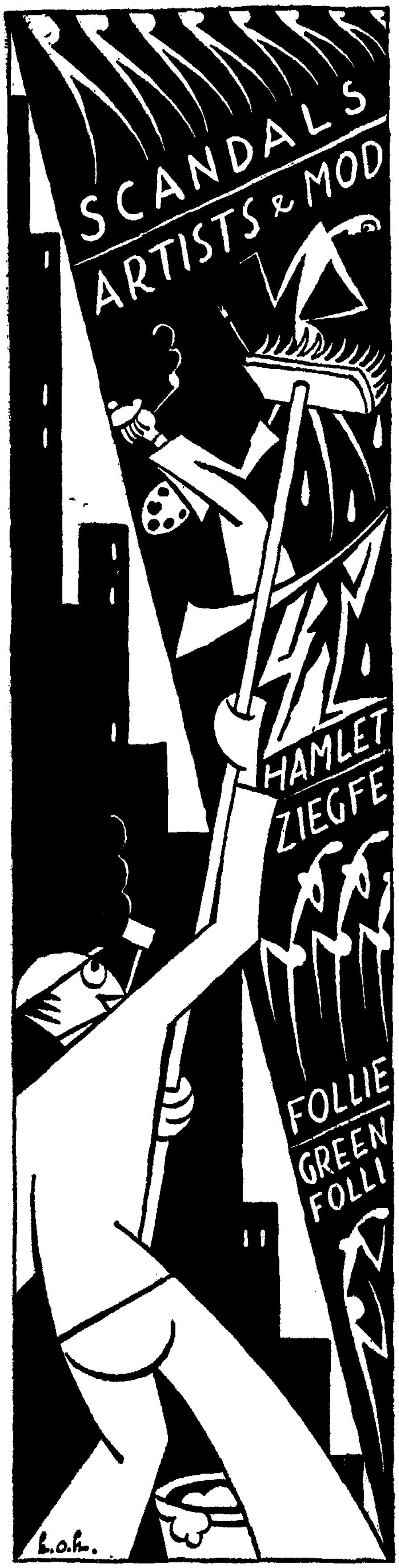
CHARLES BARSOTTI

Broadway marks the spot where the new momentum of America's twentieth century found its first wonderful playground. "Prosperity never before imagined, power never reached by anything but a meteor had made the world irritable, nervous, querulous, unreasonable and afraid" is how Henry Adams characterized New York in 1905. To both comprehend and assuage these powerful new industrial agitations, the new American rhythm required new and powerful magic. On Broadway's Golden Mile, prosperity and exhaustion, power and personality, dynamism and panic coalesced in their most vigorous and unrepentant forms. In its songs, Broadway provided a backbeat of promise; in its happy endings, an escape from defeat; in the pratfalls of its clowns, the hope of resilient survival. America has always been a percentage play, and Broadway turned the gamble into fun. It was the stage on which the nation first acted out the quintessential drama of the American sweepstakes. In its pageant of big winners and big losers—a show that never closes—Broadway bore gaudy witness not only to the abundance in the land but also to the particularly vindictive nature of its idea of triumph, in which it was possible to make both a name and "a killing." The commonest citizen could rise by pluck, luck, and talent into the aristocracy of success. To take on Broadway was an act of faith for any aspiring theatre person, but it was a peculiar *kind* of faith. Broadway religion preached then, as it does now, the beatification of the bottom line, the gospel of good times, and, most important, the salvation of applause.

Broadway, like its stars, had to glow. And it did. Brilliance has always been Broadway's defining element and its central metaphor. Lights turned Broadway into "the Great White Way," "the Street of the Midnight Sun," "the Midtown Coney Island." Broadway held back the night just as it resuscitated high spirits. "It is a glowing summer afternoon all night," the French novelist Paul Morand wrote about Forty-second Street. "One might almost wear white trousers and a straw hat. Theatres, night clubs, movie palaces, restaurants are all lighted at every porthole. Undiscovered prisms, rainbows squared." Miles of cable, thousands of pulsing bulbs, millions of watts of energy blended people with products in an extravaganza of self-promotion. Names sizzled in the night sky, branding the heavens with their imperialism. Reflecting on Broadway signs, the English critic G. K. Chesterton wrote, "What a glorious garden of wonders this would be to anyone who was lucky enough to be unable to read." But to the American, filled with the century's sincere itch for progress and perfection, there was no more sensational signpost of identity than to "see your name in lights." Broadway stardom made a romance of individualism, and every theatre marquee made spectacular the self's separation from others: the name illuminated, the name rewarded, the name tyrannical. "When I do a show, the whole show revolves around *me*," said Ethel Merman, one of Broadway's greatest musical-comedy stars and *philosophes*, "and if I don't show up, they can forget it!"

Broadway made a myth of show *business*, and the great stars of its heyday—playful simulacra of the new corporate man whom Henry Adams saw emerging "with ten times the endurance, energy, will, and mind of the old type"—regarded themselves primarily as businessmen. "I am a salesman of songs and jokes," Al Jolson said. "Just as any other man sells merchandise, I have to sell my goods to the audience. I got selling experience in small stores; these stores were called vaudeville." In Broadway's hubbub of market forces, fame was box-office vigorish, and was therefore dearly prized. The particular virulent American kind of fame was cooked up on Broadway long before Hollywood mastered the merchandising of celebrity. Fame (the word has its root in the Latin word for "rumor") spawned that journalistic mutation—part reporter, part fabulist—the Broadway gossip columnist. Leonard Lyons, Earl Wilson, Ed Sullivan, Louis Sobol, and, especially, the Big Daddy of ballyhoo, Walter Winchell, became the unofficial biographers of the rialto, turn-



H.O. HOFMAN

ing Broadway into a whispering gallery of urban glory. Winchell coined a telegraphic style to capture the breathless, reckless, impudent thrill of Broadway, whipping up the sense of anticipation that made both the street and the society so distinctive. Eugene O'Neill called Broadway a "showshop," and he wasn't wrong. Seriousness, which has had many victories on Broadway—the plays of O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee, and Arthur Kopit—has never fared as happily in its raucous entrepreneurial environment as frivolity. But Broadway's frivolous entertainment, in its refusal to suffer, has itself become a metaphor, giving weight and dimension to that most mischievous and ambivalent of American guarantees—"the pursuit of happiness." The comedians who until the Second World War dominated the Broadway stage as its "low comics" became the models for the next generation's high art, inspiring such theatrical innovators as Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, V. Meyerhold, and, of course, Samuel Beckett, whose first American production reached Broadway in 1956.

Although this year Broadway celebrates a century around Times Square, the Broadway of legend really began in the twenties. The Broadway that now seems old to us was substantially new to the generation of twenties artists who made it legend. They were not only making a new theatre but inhabiting a new landscape. Neon arrived in 1924. The Music Box Theatre was new (1921), and so were the Martin Beck (1924), Madison Square Garden (1925), the Guild (1925), the Mansfield (1926), the Alvin (1927), the John Golden (1927), and the Majestic (1927).

The New Yorker's Broadway roll call is enough to get the salmon going upstream in any theatre fan. To wit: Marc Connelly, with "Merton of the Movies," "Beggar on Horseback," and "The Green Pastures"; George S. Kaufman, who, besides directing "The Front Page," "My Sister Eileen," and "Guys and Dolls," collaborated on "The Royal Family," "You Can't Take It with You," "The Man Who Came to Dinner," the Marx Brothers vehicles "The Cocoanuts" and "Animal Crackers," and "Of Thee I Sing," the first musical to win the Pulitzer Prize; Ring Lardner, who collaborated on "June Moon"; S. N. Behrman, with "Biography" and "No Time for Comedy"; S. J. Perelman, with "The Beauty Part" and, in collaboration with Ogden Nash, "One Touch of Venus"; James Thurber, with "The Male Animal"; John O'Hara, with "Pal Joey"; Truman Capote, with the book and lyrics for "House of Flowers." This Broadway alliance has continued in recent years with plays by such *New Yorker* writers as Woody Allen ("Don't Drink the Water," "Play It Again, Sam"), Thomas Meehan ("Annie"), Jules Feiffer ("Little Murders," "Knock Knock"), and Michael Frayn ("Noises Off"). *New Yorker* writing has inspired other Broadway high spots, including Ruth McKenney's "My Sister Eileen"; Clarence Day's "Life with Father"; and Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," which began as a *New Yorker* short story entitled "Three Players of a Summer Game." And the *New Yorker* critics also played some part in the theatre world. Dorothy Parker collaborated on two unsuccessful plays and on the lyrics for "Candide." Robert Benchley lent his wit and his acting talents to "The Music Box Revue," in which he performed his famous "Treasurer's Report." Wolcott Gibbs wrote a well-received comedy, "Season in the Sun." To this quirky entertainment history must be added the fact that Kenneth Tynan produced the longest-running revue in the twentieth century, "Oh, Calcutta!" History should also note that Alexander Woollcott, a *New Yorker* stalwart, served as the model for (and later acted in) "The Man Who Came to Dinner"; and even the magazine's founder, Harold Ross, made it to Broadway as a character in two plays—one of them, "Metropole," written by his former secretary.

We invent our history from what's left. And what remains of Broadway has no richer or more delightful archive than *The New Yorker* itself. So, as the year-long celebration of Broadway begins, *The New Yorker* offers this collection of edited Profiles and reviews and selected cartoons, caricatures, and covers to honor the spirit of high times gone by and to come. It is a short, subjective canter through Broadway history. Many great performers are not included here. Many great writers are not quoted. Many wonderful productions must be denied a mention. But the ambition of *The New Yorker's* writing and of the Broadway theatre was—and still is—the same: to corrupt an audience with pleasure. ♦

CAMEO

CHEZ GERSHWIN

In the nineteen-twenties, George Gershwin was the toast of Broadway. Here, in a 1929 Profile, the playwright S. N. Behrman schmoozes about life with Gershwin and his ménage.

When I first knew George Gershwin he was living with his family in an apartment in 110th Street. To me, who am forced when I want to write so much as a postcard to shut all doors, cut off the telephone, and cere myself carefully in an immutable silence, it was a perpetual wonder that Gershwin could do his work in the living-room of this particular flat, the simultaneous stamping ground of the other members of the family and the numberless relatives and visitors who would lounge through, lean on the piano, chat, tell stories, and do their setting-up exercises. I have seen Gershwin working on the score of the Concerto in F in a room in which there must have been six other people talking among themselves, having tea, and playing checkers. In those days Gershwin used to mumble ineffectually that what he needed was privacy. This mild protest went on for several years and resulted finally in the purchase of a five-story house in West 103rd Street.

At one time, during those 110th Street days, Gershwin was working simultaneously on the Concerto and the scores of "The Song of the Flame" and "Tip-Toes." During this triple creation he would occasionally emigrate to a suite of rooms in a hotel at Broadway and One Hundredth Street. But even here the "privacy" he achieved was only comparative; here, too, the rooms were generally full of admirers, voluntary secretaries who asked nothing further than to be allowed to copy out a score—and relatives.

The house in 103rd Street has only recently been abandoned, and Gershwin is installed now in a penthouse apartment in Riverside Drive. To complete the gesture of emancipation, the place is done in ultra-modern style—a rather swooning, Melisandish bedroom, terraced bookshelves and elongated wall-lights in the living-room, and over the dining-room table a weirdly crenellated electric lamp that reminds me somehow of the last act of "Dynamo." One room, though, is fitted as a gymnasium with old-fashioned punching-bags and fencing-foils.

Personally I regard the break-up of the Gershwin ménage with considerable regret, because it will probably minimize my contacts with Gershwin père. He is short, rotund, inclined to literalness, and he has that singular and unerring faculty which certain originals have for saying, in any situation, that final thing beyond which there is nothing left to be said. There has accumulated a saga of anecdotes emanating from him; when I meet George or Ira I simply say, "What's the latest?" and I am generally told.

The latest happens to be this. The family was discussing the new Einstein paper and George commented on the astonishing compactness of scientific vocabulary:

"Imagine working for twenty years and putting your results into three pages!"

"Well," said Mr. Gershwin calmly, "it was probably very small print!"

I come now to a side of Gershwin's talent of which I can speak because I have been under its spell—his immediate talent as a pianist, as an interpreter of his own songs. You get the sense of a complete mastery, a complete authority—the most satisfactory feeling any artist can give you. When he sits at the piano and plays his own songs in a roomful of people, the effect that he evokes is extraordinary. I have seen Kreisler, Zimbalist, Auer, and Heifetz caught up in the heady surf that inundates a room the moment he strikes a chord. It is a feat not only of technique but of sheer virtuosity of personality. At the piano Gershwin takes on a new life and so do his auditors. He sings. He makes elaborate gestures. When he comes to a line in "My Little Ducky"—

> Gloria Swanson is hot for me,
> Look at the pin she got for me—

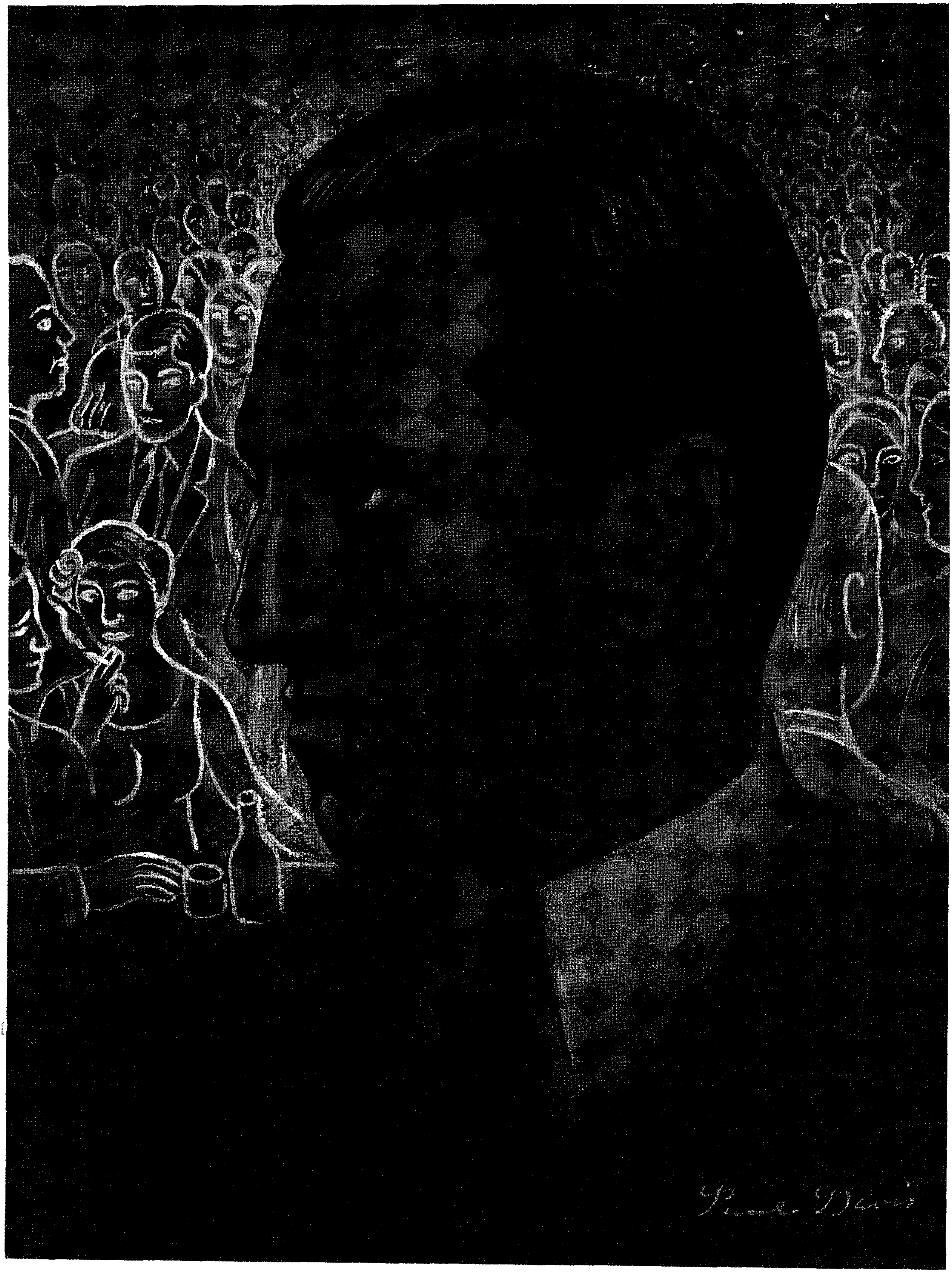
his hand flies to his tie to convey the better Miss Swanson's magnanimity. Described, this sounds grotesque, but actually it is as beautifully integrated as a clever harmony. Gershwin becomes a sort of sublimated and transplanted troubador, singing an elemental emotion, an unabashed humor . . .

> Do, do, do what you've done done done before . . .
> Sigh away, cry away, fly away to heaven . . .

Vicariously, you obey. (What a stunt it would be for someone to take a slow movie of a group of people crowded around a piano while Gershwin is playing and run it off without music!) Illuminated and vitalized by his own music, his own voice, his own eager sense of the rhythm of life, Gershwin instantly conveys that illumination and that vitality to others, and that is why he can at once pick up the confused and disparate elements of the average New York party and precipitate them—willy-nilly—into a medium warm and homogeneous and ecstatic.

Of course, Gershwin enjoys his own playing and his own music and his own talent. It is part of the integrity of his effect. There are people who will tell you that Gershwin can't write a tune and there are people who will tell you that he plays too long at parties. There are, in fact, all sorts of people. As a matter of fact, Gershwin has been exploited mercilessly by hostesses—and hosts—whose parties he has saved from irredeemable dullness. I have referred to Gershwin as ingenuous. This is a condescension with which articulate people often indulge themselves when speaking of the less articulate. There are moments when I gather that Gershwin is not unable to evaluate nicely his own place in society. He told me once that his mother had cautioned him against playing too much at parties. With engaging candor Gershwin admitted that there might be some truth in this, but was it ingenuousness or sophistication which prompted him to add: "You see the trouble is, when I don't play, I don't have a good time!"? ♦

PAUL DAVIS


Paul Davis

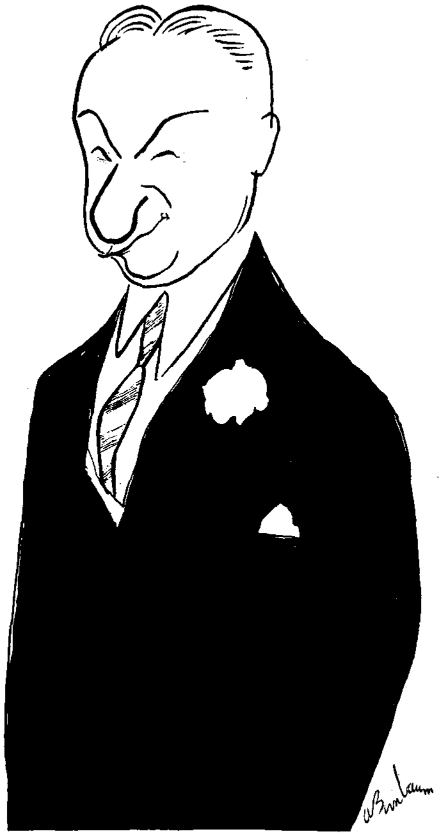
CAMEO

THE GREAT GLORIFIER

Florenz Ziegfeld, who invented the Ziegfeld Girl and showcased the great American clowns in his "Follies," was profiled in 1931 by one of the era's finest critics of popular culture, Gilbert Seldes.

DURING the recurrent natural crises of his life—the weeks when he is producing a new show—Florenz Ziegfeld has no past. He lives in an immediate world of girls, lights, colors, costumes, and scenery. In the background of his mind, perpetually brushed away like a persistent mosquito, is a comedian with a sketch. If Ziegfeld had a past, if he had a memory of a past, he would know that year after year he had used comedians and comic sketches in his own productions. But he lives only in the present, and the present consists of girls and costumes for girls and settings for girls in costumes. He has no idea that three generations of playgoers have patronized the "Follies" because they were spirited and funny. To him they are still girl shows. In the midst of a thousand demands for his time and attention he will spend half an hour changing the position of a rosette on a chorus girl's costume and refuse two minutes for the discussion of a gag or a blackout. He has been entirely untouched by the mockery which "glorifying the American girl" attracted, and "glorified" is in the Ziegfeld office the common and preferred synonym for "in the chorus." You hear "she was glorified in 1921," or "she hasn't been glorified since 1924," and there is neither self-consciousness nor irony in the expression. The authorship of the phrase is, by the way, a mystery. In 1914 Mr. Ziegfeld said: "Women glorify gowns and certain gowns can glorify certain girls." Whatever press-agent arranged these words came close to Ziegfeld's own idea of his ambition in life. But a remark which was wrung from him by the failure of "Mlle. Napoleon" in 1903—his only failure up to that time—has none of the marks of press-agentry and is equally illuminating. "It serves me right," he said, "for trying to be artistic."

The "Follies," probably better known than any other American entertainment, except the minstrel show, began in the season of 1907-08. Ziegfeld had been associated with Joe Weber (previously and subsequently of Weber & Fields), and when Weber bought him out, Ziegfeld went to Europe, explaining that "Wanderlust got me." It was for a time a highly profitable Wanderlust because in his first year abroad, at Monte Carlo and Biarritz and the other proper places, Ziegfeld won about a million and a half dollars, one hundred thousand dollars of it at a single session of baccarat. But he overstayed his luck and he was broke when he returned to America. Yet he had in his mind a fortune greater than all he had lost: a clear memory of the "Folies Bergère" and a definite intention to produce similar revues in America. The first "Follies" cost him thirteen thousand dollars to produce and thirty-eight hundred dollars a week to run. Twenty years later the cost of production was twenty times as great, the weekly outgo was over twenty-five thousand dollars, and the profits were not so handsome.



ABE BIRNBAUM

By 1913 we can catch sight of Florenz Ziegfeld in one of his finest manifestations. Year after year the "Follies" had gone well and Ziegfeld was becoming an authority on two subjects: the beauty of women and the art of the dance. (It is perhaps the highest compliment to his skill as a producer that when he was to be challenged for supremacy it took two men to do it: George White, with the Charleston and the Black Bottom, definitely surpassed Ziegfeld as the producer of new dances, and Earl Carroll, with his proud boast of the most beautiful girls in the world, still carries on the fight in the other quarter.) By 1913 Ziegfeld was generally held responsible not only for such specific forms as the Grizzly Bear, the Turkey Trot, the Glide, and the Dip, but for the dancing mania as a whole. He was himself a fanatical Turkey Trotter, and Rennold Wolf, who wrote sketches for the "Follies," said that Ziegfeld was followed from restaurant to restaurant, from cabaret to cabaret "by all the champion trotters of the town."

SUCCESSFUL, accustomed to the handling of vast sums of money and to the control of the destinies of hundreds of people ever since he was a young man, Ziegfeld has had perfect freedom to develop his idiosyncrasies. He is luxurious; he takes pleasure in the excessive and the rare. His lavender-colored shirts are countless and he certainly never wears the same suit of clothes twice in succession, so dazzling his associates that they are under the impression that once he has worn a suit it disappears from his wardrobe. Long before Miss Fannie Brice said "Order me anything out of season," Ziegfeld had made the unseasonable his aim in diet, quail being a favorite delicacy. He likes terrapin and liked the way a chef in Baltimore prepared it, so he brought the chef to "Palm Beach Nights," and although the production was a financial failure, Ziegfeld was sufficiently pleased with the cuisine not to mind very much. This chef, or his successor, prepares all the meals for Ziegfeld when he is travelling on trains.

His office is a large room with curved windows on the Sixth Avenue side of his theatre. On the long table with the framed photographs of his family are hundreds of carved elephants, knickknacks, boxes, and gadgets. He is superstitious about elephants and likes to look into a crystal ball. There are always boxes of candy on his desk and for the past year or two there has been a pair of silk stockings in a humidor. They are an accident; somebody brought them in as a sample and they were dropped there. But they can be accepted as an unimportant symbol of the great glorifier.

Beauty is a business with him, a serious, considered business, and although his method of presentation has changed, his own idea of what he is doing is unaffected. He is a practical man; he knows that you must have dancing, music, and comedy in the kind of show he is producing. Music and dancing he happens to like himself and both are elements in the presentation of girls. He knows that there must be a balance between the noble ladies, who merely walk on and are observed, and the ponies, whose beauty is more effective when they are in action. But comedy is a thorn in his flesh. His old nickname was Gloomy Gus. People who have known him for years have yet to see him smile and there are almost no records of Ziegfeld's laughing aloud. He actually does not know what is funny and can put on a show starring Ed Wynn and directly after that a show like "Smiles," without being aware of the fact that the elements in them are entirely different, without knowing that "Smiles" lacked the rough humor, the heartiness of fun which a lavish revue requires. After the failure of "Smiles," he brought Gene Buck back to make this year's "Follies," although he still suspects that Buck's idea of a balance between exhibited beauty and various kinds of humor is so much theory. Even the instant success of Earl Carroll and George White, who restored something of the atmosphere of the burlesque show to the revue, whose humor was louder and funnier, did not shake Ziegfeld's faith in his formula. His answer was still the same: beautiful girls. ♦

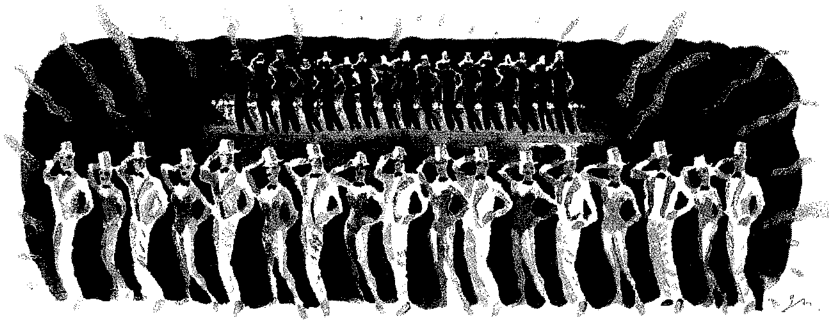
GERARD NICOLAS

INTERLUDE 1975
"A CHORUS LINE"

"A Chorus Line," conceived, choreographed, and directed by Michael Bennett, and now on view at the Public, is the most original, joyous, generous-spirited, and dynamic new musical to come along in years—a loving salute to the theatre and heart's balm to the permanently stagestruck. The action takes place on an open stage with long, hinged mirrors as the only backdrop (Robin Wagner's stunning design), where twenty-four boys and girls in rehearsal clothes, all of them refreshing and attractive, are gathered to try out for eight jobs in the chorus of a forthcoming show. Some of them are experienced, others are relatively new to the business. In the first number, they are put through their paces, together and in groups of four, to a lively song, "I Hope I Get It." The director, a fellow called Zach, runs up the aisle to the back of the house, lines everybody up, asks for stage names, real names, ages, and résumés. These résumés, as sung and danced and spoken, are the show, and Marvin Hamlisch, the composer (he wrote the score for "The Way We Were"), and his lyricist, Edward Kleban, have provided tuneful, varied, witty, and entirely appropriate songs for the job-seekers. The résumés, which start out to be program biogs, slowly become much more than that, as Zach himself, through canny and sympathetic questions, becomes a kind of father confessor to everybody. (The strong book is by James Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante.) By the time the evening is over, we know all about these boys and girls and, by extension, about a lot of other boys and girls in the theatre (and out of it).

The thin thread of plot is provided by Cassie (Donna McKechnie, a beautiful dancer and a good singer), once the lover of Zach, who pulled her out of a long-ago chorus line to almost make a star of her. She left him years before, her career has come to a dead stop, and she is determined, over his protests, to start again. In a charming number, "The Music and the Mirror (and the Chance to Dance for You)," she lets us know why. Every number, every routine is good, and at least two of them—as performed by the magnetic Priscilla Lopez, in the character of a crackling, spunky, funny Puerto Rican girl named Diana—are showstoppers. In "Nothing," she reviews a barren stretch she endured under a bad teacher of acting at the School of Performing Arts, and in the buoyant, tender "What I Did for Love," she refutes the cheap cynicism of every show-business exposé you ever saw in movies or on the stage.

Michael Bennett, with the help of his colleagues, has recharged the musical-comedy form. Joseph Papp and his associate producer, Bernard Gersten, have launched "A Chorus Line" at the Newman—the most charming of all the theatres at the Public and, I think, in town. It might be a good plan to try to see it there before it rockets to Broadway and the moon. —Edith Oliver



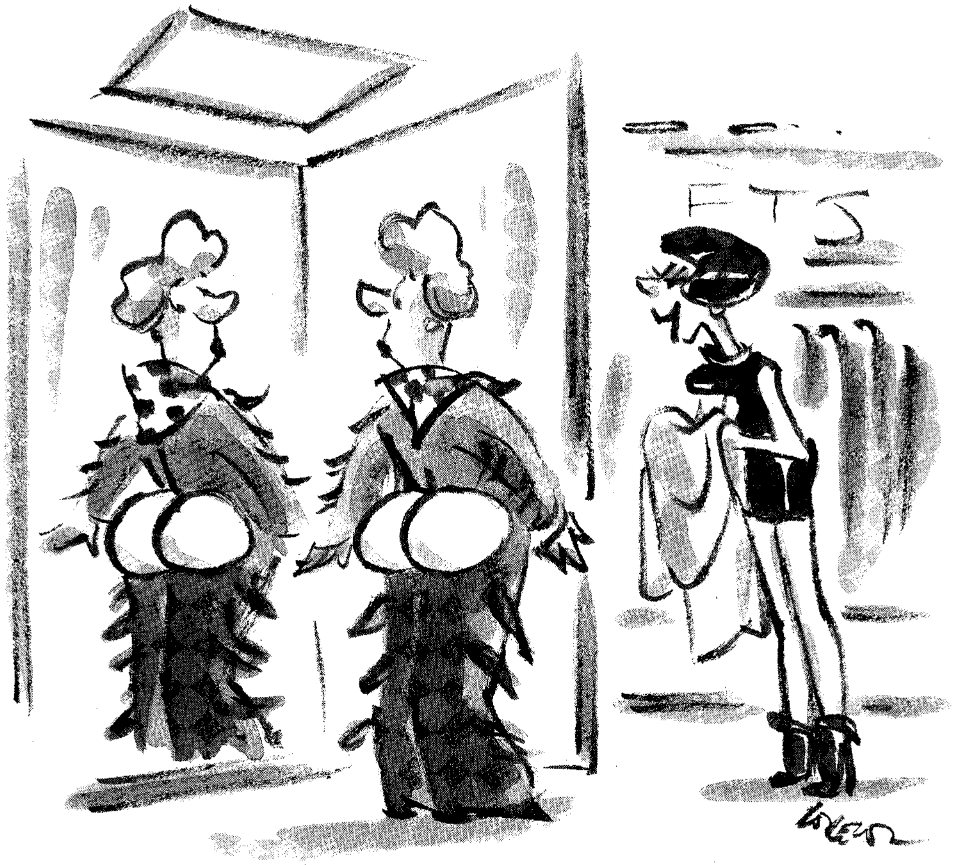
CAMEO

FUNNY GIRL

"I may be a bad woman, but I'm awful good company," joked Fannie Brice in the Ziegfeld "Follies." And she was, as the novelist ("Duel in the Sun") and screenwriter Niven Busch, Jr., discovered in this 1929 Profile.

Fannie Brice represents Broadway less by being its product than a comment on it. Her talent, rare in that environment, is to make fakes look ridiculous, a talent she accounts for by saying that she had the luck to be born homely. That is not entirely true. At serious moments her face, with its green eyes and big mouth, is handsome, and she moves with a sort of awkward easiness that makes you wonder why the critics of her early efforts always called her homely. Perhaps they meant her nose. The operation that straightened and refined that organ a few years ago was the only mental or physical alteration in what nature made her that Fannie Brice has ever allowed.

She was born Fannie Borach in 1893, near Delancey Street. Her father, an Alsatian Jew, owned some saloons. Her mother, a Hungarian, helped run them, brought up the children, and cooked the free lunches. Fannie won five dollars singing "When You Know You're Not Forgotten by the Girl You Can't Forget" on amateur night in a Brooklyn theatre. Later she sang in a stereopticon parlor in Eighty-third Street and then in a Cohan & Harris revue. Fired by Harris for bad dancing, she played one-night stands through Pennsylvania with a theatrical trainer named Rachel Lewis, trouped with a Hurtig & Seamon burlesque show, and was singing dialect songs by Irving Berlin in the Columbia Burlesque house when Florenz Ziegfeld saw her and made her a headliner in the "Follies."



"It's the Will Rogers look—don't you love it?"

Fannie Brice was then seventeen. She had formally dedicated herself to the stage some time before when, tired of being called "More-Ache" and "Bore-Act" by her friends, she changed her name to Brice, the name of a friend of her mother's which Fannie had liked when she heard it as a child. The reputation Ziegfeld was helping to procure for her under her new name opened the gateways for a career rich from the first in exciting circumstances. The streets in which she had grown up, the dark houses crowded with noises, accidents, and stubborn joys that civilization suppresses or ignores, had taught her a divided sympathy.

In those days she used to steal beer from her father to give to neighboring women who were sick or nursing; her outward, physical pity was supplemented by an altered but similar feeling directed toward herself. She wanted people to feel sorry for her. In a department store in which she worked for a while as a wrapper she told the girls her mother was dying and that her family was so poor they didn't have enough to eat. When the people in the store, believing her, offered bread and old clothes in sympathy, she came to work next day in her Sunday dress, wearing her mother's and sister's earrings, two earrings in each ear, and explained that she had only been fooling—her father was a millionaire.

Later, when she was on the road, truths suggested by the things she had done as a child became clear in her mind. "People like to feel miserable. You make them laugh they will forget you, but if you make them cry they will never forget you."

It still amuses her to remember Ziegfeld coming to her with a typewritten lyric in his hand and asking: "Do you think you can make them cry?"

Fannie Brice looked doubtful.

"I think you can," said the producer, handing her the song. "Just try it over once."

The accompanist rippled an introductory chord and after a minute of study the girl sang the first lines of a lyric written by Channing Pollock for the French tune "Mon Homme":

It costs me a lot but there's one thing
  that I've got
It's my man . . .

She sang it without gestures, her strong contralto giving an unforgettable reality to the crude words of the verse, the haunting, repetitive tune.

Neither Fannie Brice's appearance

nor her early career had given her much opportunity for sentimental love affairs. Her most vivid memory of her first husband, a Springfield barber named White, was his liberal use of his own hair-tonics. "God, he smelled nice." She was not upset when her mother had the marriage annulled, shortly after it had taken place, on the ground that she was under age. She felt differently about Nicky Arnstein, whom she married in 1918. When he was accused of fraud and forgery, she did not believe the charges, and gave little satisfaction to the District Attorney who tried to find out where he was hiding.

"Are you sure your memory is as bad as that, Miss Brice?"

"Yes, it is very bad. I can only remember songs and telephone numbers."

A few months ago she married Billy Rose, the songwriter. Their mornings begin at one in the afternoon. She does not like to leave the house till her children are back from school; often her mother, who lives on the West Side, comes over to eat and sometimes to cook the Brice luncheon. While Rose waits to start downtown, she anxiously arranges the last detail of her costume; she reads her mail in the car, at the same time making plans for the day, humming a tune she is learning, and looking out of the window. As the limousine moves toward Fifty-ninth Street, she keeps interrupting herself to call attention to people in the street, perpetually distracted and absorbed by the city of which her name, burning in golden letters through metropolitan evenings, is a characteristic, and in a way a permanent part. ♦

CRITICS' ROUND TABLE

DOROTHY PARKER

While pinch-hitting in 1931 for her vacationing friend Robert Benchley, the Sultana of Swat took a few cuts at American theatre.

And what do you think I've got here, under all this shining tinsel? I have a broken heart, that's what I have. I've got heartbreak, I've got sick spells, I've got nightmare—who could ask for anything more? Who could ask for anything more?

I smashed this poor heart in what I once thought to be an honorable cause. I sought to learn, seriously and with sympathy, what was toward on the New York stage. And in the space of two consecutive evenings I beheld as many dramas, entitled, in the order named, "A Woman Denied" and "Paging Danger." I realize that you, on hearing those titles, would have shut yourself in your own room, and pushed the bureau across the door; but I am a sap for hope, and so I attended the entertainments. They were, each of them, expensively cast and nicely presented; it is certain that they were witnessed in rehearsal by persons financially interested, and, therefore, critical; it is more than probable that they had been displayed previous to their New York showing in out-of-town auditoriums before paying audiences; each one enlisted the services of those long-versed in the theatre. Why in hell, then—and I mean that "in hell"—they should have been deemed of sufficient worth and importance to be set on the generous boards of two reputable theatres in what I had liked to think of as one of the cultural centers of the world, I cannot fathom. Certainty, anyone can cope with; it is bewilderment that breaks the heart and racks the soul. I am licked. I give up, here and now and forever, any understanding of the ways of Broadway.

Personal: Robert Benchley, please come home. Will not be responsible for your debts.

If you want to, you can pick me out of any crowd, these days. I am the little one in the corner who did not think that "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" was a great play, nor even a good play. It is true that I paid it the tribute of tears, but that says nothing, for I am one who weeps at Victorian costumes. It is true again that when the stage maid flung open the door of "Elizabeth Barrett's bed-sitting-room" and announced, "Mr. Robert Browning," I felt it right in the old spine. But the sight of Mr. Jo Mielziner's exquisite setting and costumes, and the sound of a mighty name are not, after all, the stuff of great playwriting.

Mr. Rudolf Besider, whose play has been so highly praised here and so lengthily successful in London, has written of that strange, scared household at 50 Wimpole Street, where numerous souls slunk through their years under the terrible tyranny of a monstrous puritan. That Edward Moulton-Barrett was a monster and a maniac, a self-appointed czar, and, to bring matters to a climax, an old crab, we have all been told. But those scenes in which he seeks to be a little more than kin and less than kind to his daughter Elizabeth—surely those are apocryphal. Everything else we have all heard of him, but isn't it a little late in the day to drag up incest? He was bad enough just plain, without making him fancy.

So then there was a musical comedy called "America's Sweetheart," by the Messrs. Fields, Rodgers, and Hart, two of whom seem to me to be extraordinarily over-rated young men. This costly and colorful production is a satire on Hollywood, with, running through it in the American manner, a love story of the sort that all our bitter and brilliant young satirists purport to satirize, and then go employ in their works. Mr. Hart has donated lyrics the rhymes of which are less internal than colonic; they have also a peculiar, even for Broadway, nastiness of flavor. What, by the way, has ever become of that little thing called taste? And Mr. Rodgers has contributed a truly charming score, each number of which gets better each time you hear it. Employed in the entertainment are Inez Courtney, Jack Whiting, Harriette Lake, and Gus Shy, all of whom do what they can. They are assisted by as pretty and as well-trained a chorus as you ever saw in your life, if that's what makes you go to shows. And there is, besides, Jeanne Aubert, whose husband, if you can believe the papers, recently pled, through the French courts, that he be allowed to restrain his wife from appearing on the stage. Professional or not, the man is a dramatic critic.

Personal: Robert Benchley, please come home. Nothing is forgiven. ♦

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THE NEW YORKER

CRITICS' ROUND TABLE

ROBERT BENCHLEY

This inimitable humorist and charter member of the Algonquin Round Table was The New Yorker's drama critic from 1929 to 1939.

IN the midst of the acclaim with which Eugene O'Neill is being so justly hailed for his latest and most gigantic *tour de force*, "Mourning Becomes Electra," and in the confusion of cross-references to the Greek dramatists from whom he derived his grim and overpowering story, are we not forgetting one very important source of his inspiration, without which he might perhaps have been just a builder of word-mountains? Was there not standing in the wings of the Guild Theatre, on that momentous opening night, the ghost of an old actor in a white wig, with drawn sword, who looked on proudly as the titanic drama unfolded itself, scene by scene, and who murmured, with perhaps just the suggestion of a chuckle: "That's good, son! Give 'em the old Theatre!"? The actor I refer to needs no introduction to the older boys and girls here tonight—Mr. James O'Neill, "The Count of Monte Cristo" and the father of our present hero.

Let us stop all this scowling talk about "the inevitability of the Greek tragedy" and "O'Neill's masterly grasp of the eternal verities" and let us admit that the reason why we sat for six hours straining to hear each line through the ten-watt acoustics of the Guild Theatre was because "Mourning Becomes Electra" is filled with good, old-fashioned, spine-curling melodrama. It is his precious inheritance from his trouper-father, his father who counted "One," "Two," "Three" as he destroyed his respective victims, one at the curtain to each act; it is his supreme sense of the Theatre in its most elementary appeal, which allows Eugene O'Neill to stand us on our heads (perhaps our heads would have been more comfortable) and keep us there from five in the afternoon until almost midnight. In this tremendous play he gives us not one thing that is new, and he gives us nothing to think about (unless we are just beginning to think), but he does thrill the bejeezus out of us, just as his father used to, and that is what we go to the theatre for.

In the face of such an overwhelming victory over Time, Space, and the Daily Press as that which Mr. O'Neill has won, it is perhaps puny in a single commentator to admit such a personal reaction as fatigue during the last of the three sections of the drama (for they are *not* three plays, as advertised, but one play in fourteen successive acts). But, willing as the spirit may be to take punishment, the human frame is not equipped for such a session as that which is imposed upon it in the Guild Theatre (at any rate, mine isn't, and I have a pretty good equipment), and, starting with a pretty bad scene (go ahead, strike me dead, Jove!) of comic relief at the beginning of the section called "The Haunted," I began to be cushion-conscious. This uneasiness was heightened as I saw approaching that margin of Diminishing Returns in Tragedy which I alone seem to be conscious of in O'Neill's drama, when one more fell swoop of Fate, one more killing, one more father in love with one more daughter, or one more sister in love with one more brother, and the whole thing becomes just a bit ridiculous. It was when I saw those magnificent scenes of the middle section becoming confused with a grand finale of bad comedy, incest, and extra suicide that Miss Brady's agonized cry, "I couldn't bear another death!," struck home, and I began to realize that, for me personally, "Mourning Becomes Electra" was getting to be just about one hour too long. I know that this is a purely individual and unworthy reaction, quite out of place in what should be a serious review of a great masterpiece, but, as this page is nothing if not personal, I am setting it down. And the final scene of all, in which Electra, or Lavinia, closes herself up in the great New England Greek temple for the rest of her unhappy life, content that mourning is her *métier*, made up for everything.

DURING the Holy Week lull in the theatre several of the dramatic critics got into mischief and came out with questionnaires designed to test their readers' knowledge of the Drama. Even the mildest of such tests are always a humiliation to me, owing to a tendency (the last remnant of a college education) to say "Samuel J. Tilden" when I mean "Rutherford B. Hayes" or "aluminum" when I mean "chromium," thereby making it impossible for me to answer correctly even those questions to which I *know* the answer, to say nothing of the myriad of which I am ignorant.

But when a set of questions on the very subject at which I am supposed to be earning my living can throw me, then it passes humiliation and becomes a blind rage. When I find myself naming, with great facility, three of Pinero's plays in answer to "Name three plays of Clyde Fitch," then it is time to run head on into a stout wall and tear my clothes from my body. It is in such a mood that I have decided to salve my feelings by working up a questionnaire of my own, to which I *must* get the right answers because I work backward from answer to question. Even then I am afraid that I must watch myself. Here, then, is a test based on the theatrical season which is now drawing to a close, a test on which I shall rate 100 and nobody else can guess a single answer. That ought to make me feel better.

1. What three plays am I thinking of?
2. Name every character in "The Good Companions" and who played each in the New York engagement, and *don't skip*.
3. What have the following in common: Gilbert Miller; "The Count of Monte Cristo"; Fort Worth, Texas? Name them.
4. Who wrote Ravel's "Bolero" and what producer staged it at the Earl Carroll Theatre?
5. In what murder-mystery plays during the past season could the corpse be seen breathing?
6. How many representatives of the Younger Generation on the stage would you want to have as your own children? How many actually were?
7. What has George Spelvin in common?
8. What is George M. Cohan looking at when he keeps turning his head toward the wings? What is Ed Wynn looking at when *he* keeps turning his head toward the wings? Could they possibly be looking at each other?
9. What is this Sex they are all talking about?

10. In what crook plays during 1931-32 were the following phrases used: (1) "bumped off," (2) "take for a ride," (3) "you lousy bum, you"?

11. How do actors get down when they exit by running upstairs? Is there really a bedroom up there?

12. How does Edna Best eat a cracker at every performance of "There's Always Juliet" without taking a drink of water?

13. Name four playwrights who are cross at the critics.

14. What is in the suitcases which wives carry when they are prevented at the foot of the stairs from leaving home?

15. In what play does Florette, the Maid, appear?

16. Hum one number from a current musical without getting into some number which has been written before.

17. Jump through this.

18. Write a play by a Hungarian playwright. Write two plays by a Hungarian playwright.

19. Who were the following: (1) Eugene O'Neill, (2) Martin Luther, (3) Martin Beck?

20. Who wrote Mae West?

21. Name one play which closed solely because of bad notices. Name one play which kept running solely because of good notices. Name one play.

22. What are the English actors saying?

23. What play that was consigned to the ashcan by this department ran until it was the oldest play on Broadway? (Oh, *not* "Abie's Irish Rose"! That wasn't in this department, we did not consign it to the ashcan, and we are sick of hearing about it. The play that we mean opened last fall.)

24. How many jokes does a musical have to have before it is out of the "nice" class?

25. What trilogy by what famous playwright gave what pain in the neck?

26. Why is "playwright" spelled "playwright"?

27. What well-known scenic artist suffers from misplaced hyphen, and why won't people learn?

28. What theatre on Forty-ninth Street gives off the odor of burning honey?

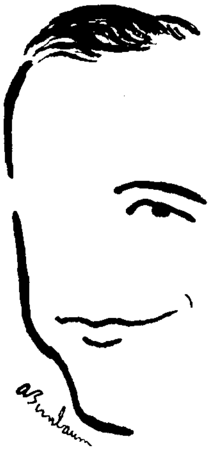
29. What was the first couch in the modern theatre to be used for something besides sex? Is Alexander Woollcott really Duse?

30. Isn't this all getting a little tiresome? ♦

ABE BIRNBAUM

INTERLUDE WITH MARLON BRANDO

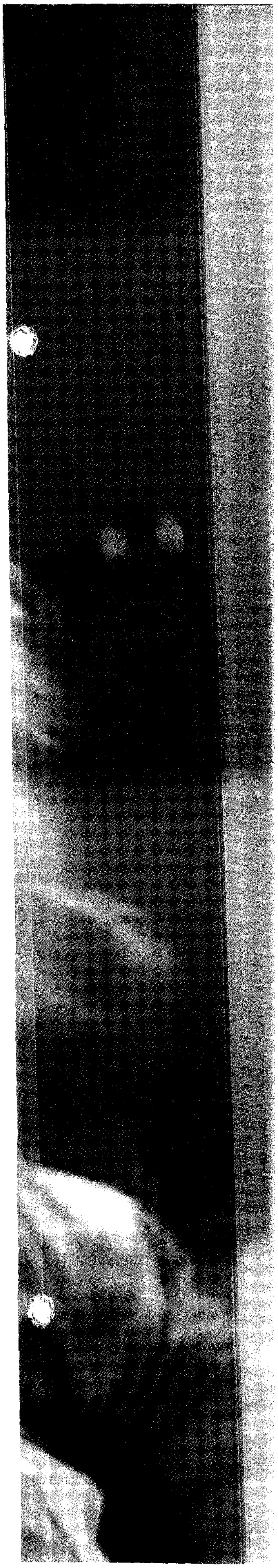
THE voice went on, as though speaking to hear itself, an effect Brando's speech often has, for, like many persons who are intensely self-absorbed, he is something of a monologuist—a fact that he recognizes and for which he offers his own explanation. "People around me never say anything," he says. "They just seem to want to hear what I have to say. That's why I do all the talking." Watching him now, with his eyes closed, his unlined face white under an overhead light, I felt as if the moment of my initial encounter with him were being re-created. The year of that meeting was 1947; it was a winter afternoon in New York, when I had occasion to attend a rehearsal of Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire," in which Brando was to play the role of Stanley Kowalski. Elia Kazan, the director of "A Streetcar Named Desire," said at that time, and has recently repeated, "Marlon is just the best actor in the world." But ten years ago, on the remembered afternoon, he was still relatively unknown; at least, I hadn't a clue to who he might be when, arriving too early at the "Streetcar" rehearsal, I found the auditorium deserted and a brawny young man stretched out atop a table on the stage under the gloomy glare of work lights, solidly asleep. Because he was wearing a white T-shirt and denim trousers, because of his squat gymnasium physique—the weight-lifter's arms, the Charles Atlas chest (though an opened "Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud" was resting on it)—I took him for a stagehand. Or did until I looked closely at his face. It was as if a stranger's head had been attached to the brawny body, as in certain counterfeit photographs. For this face was so very untough, superimposing, as it did, an almost angelic refinement and gentleness upon hard-jawed good looks: taut skin, a broad, high forehead, wide-apart eyes, an aquiline nose, full lips with a relaxed, sensual expression. Not the least suggestion of Williams' unpoetic Kowalski. It was therefore rather an experience to observe, later that afternoon, with what chameleon ease Brando acquired the character's cruel and gaudy colors, how superbly, like a guileful salamander, he slithered into the part, how his own persona evaporated—just as, in this Kyoto hotel room ten years afterward, my 1947 memory of Brando receded, disappeared into his 1957 self.



"I've seriously considered—I've very *seriously* thought about—throwing the whole thing up. This business of being a successful actor. What's the point, if it doesn't evolve into anything? All right, you're a success. At last you're *accepted*, you're welcome everywhere. But that's it, that's all there is to it, it doesn't lead anywhere. You're just sitting on a pile of candy gathering thick layers of—of *crust*." He rubbed his chin with a towel, as though removing stale makeup. "Too much success can ruin you as surely as too much failure."

"You know, it took me a long time before I was aware that that's what I was—a big success. I was so absorbed in myself, my own problems, I never looked around, took account. I used to walk in New York, miles and miles, walk in the streets late at night, and never *see* anything. I was never sure about acting, whether that was what I really wanted to do; I'm still not. Then, when I was in 'Streetcar,' and it had been running a couple of months, one night—dimly, dimly—I began to hear this roar. It was like I'd been asleep, and I woke up here sitting on a pile of candy." —TRUMAN CAPOTE

Clifford Odets, photographed by Richard Avedon in New York City, September 11, 1950.



CAMEO

THE GOLDEN BOY

Clifford Odets was the great theatrical hope of the thirties. In this 1938 Profile, John McCarten, The New Yorker's drama critic from 1960 to 1967, glimpses the man at the height of his new fame.

CLIFFORD ODETS is thoroughly dissatisfied with the contemporary theatre. The poor scripts, the awkward direction, and what he calls the "lack of creativity" depress him, and he cannot stomach the rank commercialism of the actors. Therefore he rarely goes to any plays except his own. And although he takes a proper pride in being generally accepted as the most promising young playwright in the country, he is by no means certain that the drama is his best medium of expression. He is inclined to think that he should have been a composer all along. His interest in music dates back to his early childhood, when he used to listen to his father playing the pianola. Later on the family got a phonograph, and Odets can still remember how moved he was when he first heard the Sextet from "Lucia" on a Victor Red Seal. As a boy, Odets' favorite instrument was the harmonica. He was given piano lessons for a while, but he refused to practice. It wasn't until he was twenty-five that he began to regret his childish indolence. That was when he started to write a novel about a boy who was well on the way to becoming a great pianist until he lost his left hand in an accident. Odets has since destroyed the novel, but the theme recurs in "Golden Boy," his most recent play, which concerns itself with a brilliant young violinist who breaks his hand on an opponent's head while battling for the lightweight championship.

Odets' penthouse at 1 University Place is seldom empty of music. When his electric phonograph isn't playing record after record of Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Beethoven, Odets is usually either singing or improvising chords on his Hammond organ. He sometimes interrupts a conversation with an aria. His singing voice is a rather uneasy baritone, but there is utter confidence in the sweeping gestures with which he dramatizes his delivery while coursing a melody.

Odets gesticulates constantly. His hands, which are extremely long and graceful, are never still. He likes to talk standing up because it gives him a chance to stride up and down, tossing his head, swelling his chest, and throwing his arms around. He often indulges in the second-balcony stare, the head back, the brows raised, the eyes opened wide behind heavy tortoiseshell glasses. He goes about his conversational histrionics with a great deal of intensity, for besides being a frustrated composer, he is a frustrated actor.

Whatever his frustrations as an actor and a composer, Odets has been conspicuously successful as a playwright. Since his "Awake and Sing!" was presented in 1935, he has been compared to O'Neill, O'Casey, and Chekhov. At thirty-one, he has aroused more earnest and ecstatic discussion among the critics than any other dramatist who has appeared in the last decade.

Odets, however, doesn't find critics very helpful. "In 'Awake and Sing!,' " he points out, "they said I didn't have any plot. Then in 'Paradise Lost' they said I had too much plot. Now they say that it's too bad to submerge the characters of 'Golden Boy' in a plot." Apart from the plot question, Odets thinks that the critics were all wrong in their unanimous disapproval of "Paradise Lost," which he regards as his best and deepest play. He has an idea that they were influenced against it because he tried to explain it to them before it opened. Odets' explanation of the play, which was mailed to all the critics, emphasized the fact that the people of "Awake and Sing!" and "Paradise Lost" had a Chekhovian quality. The debate as to whether or not the benighted characters of "Paradise Lost" were Chekhovian lasted through a good part of the 1936 season, with Heywood Broun, Archibald MacLeish, and Theodore Dreiser, among others, upholding the affirmative. The play was a flop.

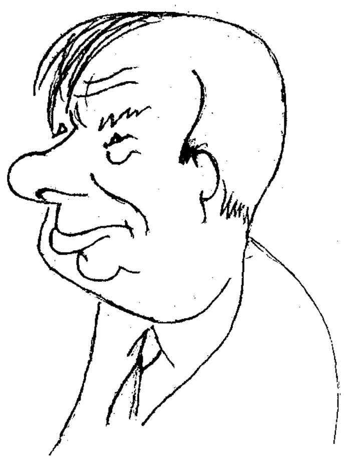
ODETS was one of the original members of the Group Theatre. He was in "Roar China!," a production of the Guild Studio, the Theatre Guild's subsidiary from which the Group eventually evolved, and he sat in on the fervid meetings at which, during the winter of 1930, the future of the Group was plotted. While the Group was in the process of being organized, Odets, in the solitude of a furnished room on West Eighty-second Street, wrestled with his soul. He says he was trying to find out what was the matter with him. With eremitic zeal he would remain in his room for two and three days at a stretch, sustaining himself chiefly on canned herring with tomato sauce and shredded-wheat biscuits. When he took the room, Odets had intended to write, but he got too involved in studying himself to accomplish much on the creative side. Apart from some voluminous letters, his literary activity was restricted to making entries in his diary. The carbons of the letters are preserved in a correspondence file that Odets still maintains today. It contains duplicates of practically all the letters he has ever written. The carbons have been an invaluable aid to him in analyzing his development, and he makes a point of reading them over every now and then. But however helpful at present, the letters didn't do much good in 1930, and Odets was a gloomy fellow when he headed for Brookfield Center, Connecticut, the following summer to rehearse his bit in "The House of Connelly," the Group's first production.

In his first two seasons with the Group, Odets wasn't particularly outstanding, and he was oppressed by the belief that nobody thought very much of his acting. While the Group was holding summer rehearsals at Dover Furnace in Dutchess County, he worked on a play about Beethoven. His dissatisfaction with the Beethoven play is revealed pretty succinctly by his diary. "Now I see again in myself flight always flight," says the diary. "Here I am writing the Beethoven play, which when it is finished may not even be about Beethoven. Why not write something about the Greenberg family, something I know better, something that is closer to me?" Once he had made up his mind to write about the Greenberg family, Odets felt a lot more cheerful. A few days later he observed in his diary, "I look at the baby that was me and rejoice." Odets started to write his new play in a cold-water flat on West Fifty-seventh Street, where he lived with some other Group members following the disastrous failure of Dawn Powell's "Big Night" in 1933. He finished it in Warrensburg, New York, while rehearsing in "Men in White," which the Group put on in 1933. When Odets submitted his play to the directors of the Group, none of them thought much of it. Harold Clurman admitted that it might have some merit, but doubted that it was actable. It wasn't until 1935 that they were willing to produce it. In the meantime the play had been held a year by one Frank Merlin, whose contribution to the 1934 season was a turkey called "False Dreams, Farewell." Odets' play was first called "I Got the Blues," but finally appeared as "Awake and Sing!" The Greenbergs of the diary wound up as a family called the Bergers.

When Odets completed "Awake and Sing!" he decided that in comparison with the other playwrights in the country he was highly talented. He has seen no reason to alter that point of view. The only other playwrights whom he admires are John Howard Lawson, Sean O'Casey, and Denis Johnston, who wrote "The Moon in the Yellow River." When a show is in rehearsal, Odets is conscientious in his attendance during the first and last weeks. In the hectic middle period, he stays away as much as possible. With Harold Clurman, the director of the Group, he has frequent and violent disputes. He is always reluctant to change his lines, and he has positive ideas about the way his plays should be staged. During rehearsals he is constantly convulsed by the humor of his work.

In whatever he does, Odets is anxious to convey to the masses a message of hope for the future. To reach the broadest possible audience, he would prefer to write for the movies. The trouble is that the studios censor his scripts so severely that it is only on the stage that he can relate his message without distortion. For that reason he hopes that the Federal Theatre will give his next play simultaneous productions throughout the country. The new play, which he intends to have ready for production any day now, will be called "The Silent Partner" and will reveal some further evils of the capitalist system. "It will," says Odets, "be the best labor play ever produced in this country or in any other country." ♦

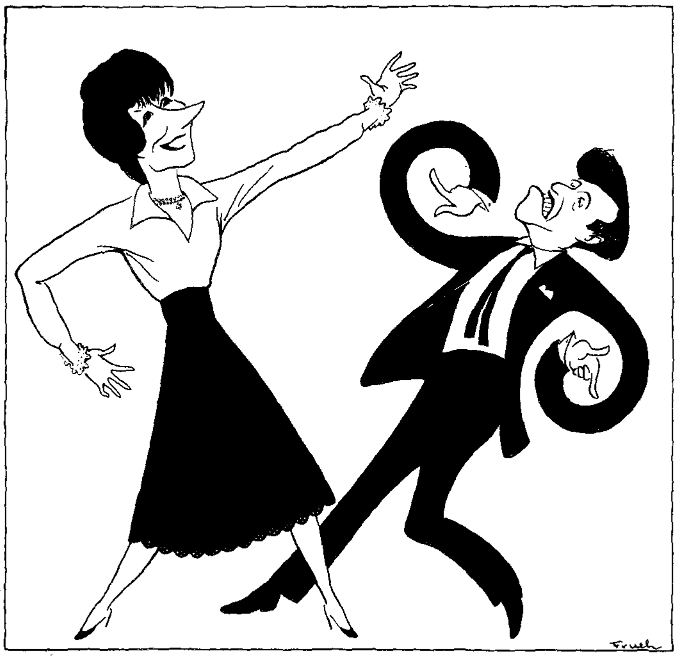
ALFRED FRUEH
1880-1968



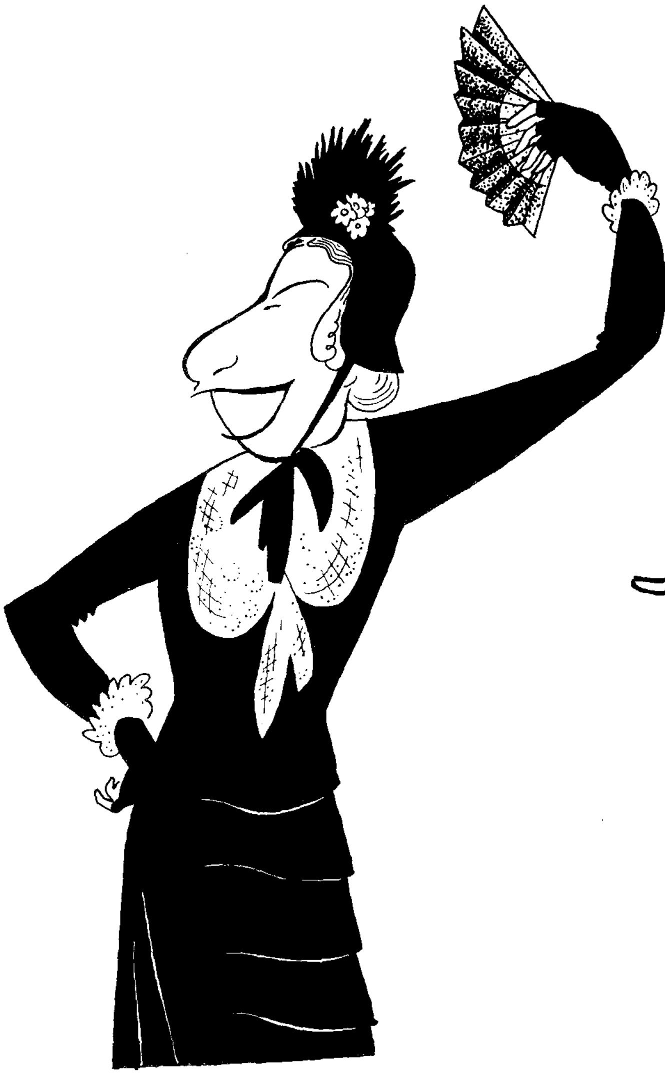
© 1972, ESTATE OF ALFRED J. FRUEH

Printed in full, his name is that of a stranger, since nobody ever spoke the second syllable of "Alfred," or thought of his surname except as it was pronounced—"free." It was a name that suited him, for by a wise exercise of his talent he was able from youth to age to lead precisely the sort of life he wished, and the pleasure that this freedom gave him he shared, in his ebullient drawings, with all the rest of us. He was a tall, sandy-haired, blue-eyed man, much of whose conversation consisted of comfortable silences. In his Paris days, he had been a friend of Matisse and Braque, and his eye and hand responded with genial acuteness to the urban scene, but he chose to become, in the best sense, countrified. He lived on a farm in northwestern Connecticut, loping barefoot among his cherished trees and, to the astonishment of city friends, munching on pine cones and other debris. On his visits to New York, he wore with relish the mask of a bumpkin; this was a device more subtle than it looked at first glance, for behind the mask was a person authentically rural, though as little a bumpkin as Thomas Jefferson.

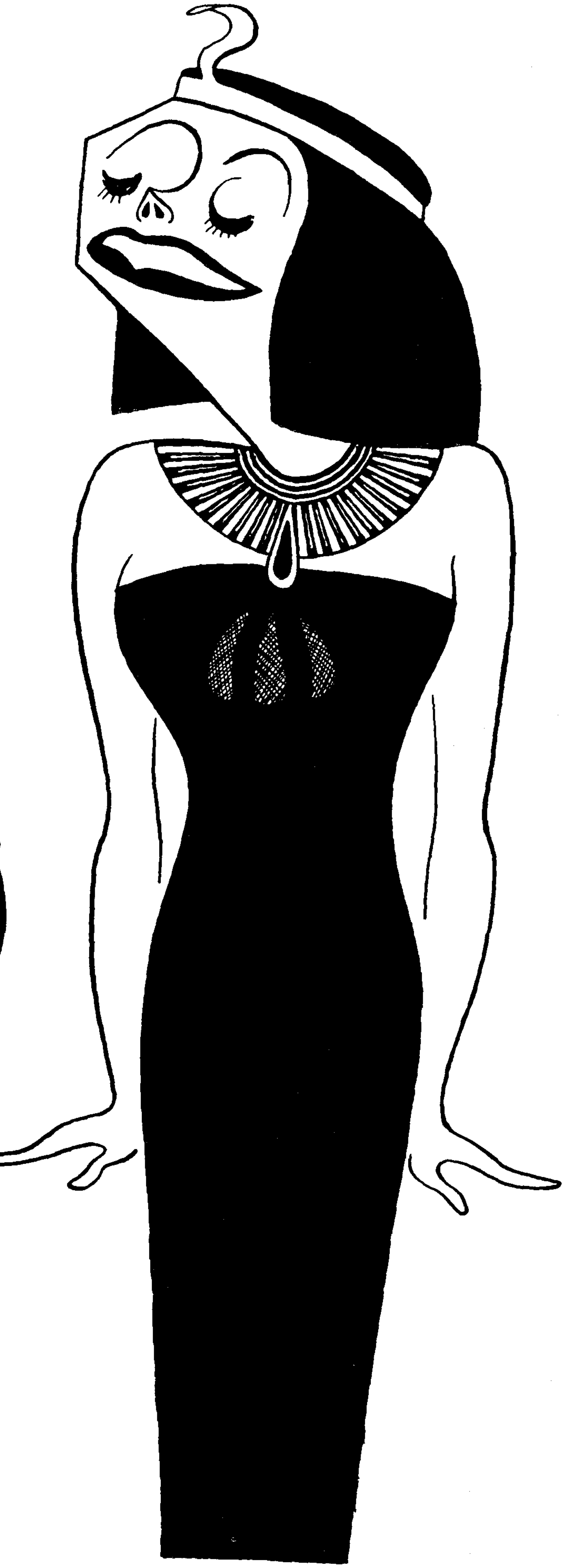
Al Frueh had two drawings in the first issue of *The New Yorker*, in 1925, and he drew its second cover. For years, his caricatures of actors and actresses appearing in the plays of the moment were a weekly adornment of the theatre department. He drew simply and boldly, in pen and ink, and, as has been true of so many artists, the older he grew, the simpler and bolder his drawing became. —Brendan Gill



"A Party with Betty Comden and Adolph Green"



José Ferrer in "Charley's Aunt"



Katharine Cornell in "Antony and Cleopatra"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ALFRED J. FRUEH; © 1947, 1975, ESTATE OF ALFRED J. FRUEH; ALFRED J. FRUEH

CAMEO

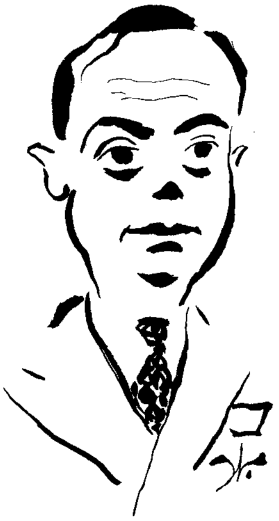
DELUXE DELIGHTS

Puckish and witty, Cole Porter's songs polished America's big names and brand names to a high shine.

BY BRENDAN GILL

BEGIN with the face, familiar from so many photographs. It is small, round, smooth-skinned, delicately modelled, invincibly boyish. Even in age, after decades of suffering, it holds hints of the implike, lovable child that we see pictured in a starched blouse and broad-brimmed straw hat at four, already eager to seek out and embrace the world. It was a world that would become his oyster, his champagne, his caviar; and in the small city of Peru, Indiana, in the flagrantly misnamed Gay Nineties, it must have been plain to the ambitious mother of the child, if not to the child himself, that the sooner one held out both arms to such a world the better.

We are haunted by the face in part because it is so unchanging—because, in a sense, it haunts itself, being at first its own jaunty and playful ghost and then its pitiful one. In any casual snapshot of an outing held who knows when in Paris, Cairo, Venice, or Hollywood, it is Cole that one instantly singles out and gives a name to. The face of the little boy on ponyback in the apple country and the face of the elderly crippled recluse dividing his time between an apartment high in the Waldorf Towers and a cottage in Williamstown is the face of the debonair undergraduate at Yale, already an accomplished charmer, who by an adroit manipulation of exceptional talents and an exceptional intelligence is offered whatever he covets and avoids whatever he dislikes. What a spoiled young man he must be! But then what excellent value he gives! All his life he will be accused of being a snob, and all his life he will deny the charge, but his snobbery, real or imaginary, is beside the point, which is that at every turn, unfailingly, he furnished the world with far more joy than he got back. In the unspoken bargain struck between genius and the rest of us, it is the rest of us who come home with full hands and, in this instance, dancing feet.



There are several classbook photographs of Cole, posing with this or that distinguished undergraduate group before a length of nineteenth-century wooden fence from the Old Campus at Yale. Cole is well dressed, not to say dudish, in these official photographs, and the face, under dark hair parted in the middle, is always in dead earnest. It is obvious that he is proud to be who he is and where he is, and why not?

To remain a sort of gentleman-composer, moving at a measured height above the squalid scramble of the marketplace, was important to Cole as a young man, and proved a considerable stumbling block to his career. Irving Berlin warned him that if he wanted to get work from theatrical producers he had better acquaint himself with the corner of Broadway and Forty-second Street, where, if his name was recognized at all in the twenties, he was written off as an expatriate highbrow. Seeking to avoid Broadway and yet hoping to be pursued by it, Cole would go so far as to rent a large and costly apartment on Fifth Avenue and invite theatrical people to parties there, but it appears not to have occurred to him that, except geographically, Fifth Avenue was even farther from Broadway than Paris and the Lido were. The desire to seem a charming amateur who just happened to enjoy all the perquisites of a hardened professional was based less on a sense of caste and class than on a deep-seated and, as it proved, ineradicable lack of confidence in himself. This was an emotion that, if it was unknown to Cole's mother and grandfather, must have been familiar enough to the father he despised. It directly contradicts the principle enunciated by Freud to the effect that no man who has been his mother's favorite knows what it is to fear failure.

Cole wished ardently to succeed; still more ardently he wished not to be known to have failed. Hints of this double goal are to be found scattered everywhere through his life. He was to give ample proof of his courage, but his refusal to defend his own work in the rough-and-tumble of preparing a show led more than one Broadway director to describe him flatly as a coward. At the peak of his popularity, if someone connected with a Porter show in rehearsal expressed skepticism about a song, Cole nearly always preferred discarding it to rewriting it—a fresh start struck him as the safest way to avoid the odious close give-and-take of criticism. The discarded song might turn up years later, slightly altered, in a new show or movie; meanwhile, the moment of dangerous self-doubt had been got past. Cole was never to be offered as much work as he wanted, or claimed to want, but he rejected many of the projects that agents and producers brought to him, because he doubted if he would be able to bring them off. Not that he would give this as a reason; an aspect of the discipline he practiced in respect to fear was that it seemed to the casual observer an emotion totally alien to him. Gentlemen had no nerves, and on the opening night of a Porter show he made a point of sitting well down front with a party of friends, laughing and applauding the show as if he hadn't the slightest doubt of its success. His behavior was gallant, and it was also self-protective: by wearing a mask of unshatterable aplomb he was putting himself beyond the reach of critics and envious rivals, to say nothing of a public always eager to observe who in the pecking order is the latest to be made to bleed. The finest of the musicals he wrote—"Kiss Me, Kate"—was the one he hesitated longest over committing himself to; he pretended that the reasons for his hesitation were that the project was too intellectual, that revivals of

MICHAEL WITTE

Shakespeare never did well at the box office, and that he didn't understand the book that Bella and Samuel Spewack had prepared. The truth was that Cole had had a couple of failures and was aware that people were saying he was through; he was simply afraid that "Kiss Me, Kate" would prove to be beyond his powers.

Porter musical comedies encompass the thirties with a Porter neatness. Cole wrote the score for the last Broadway musical of the twenties, "Wake Up and Dream," which opened on December 30, 1929, and boasted the hit song "What Is This Thing Called Love?" He also wrote the score for the last Broadway musical of the thirties, "Du Barry Was a Lady," which opened on December 6, 1939, and offered, among its twenty-odd songs, "Well, Did You Evah?," "Friendship," "But in the Morning, No," and "Do I Love You?"

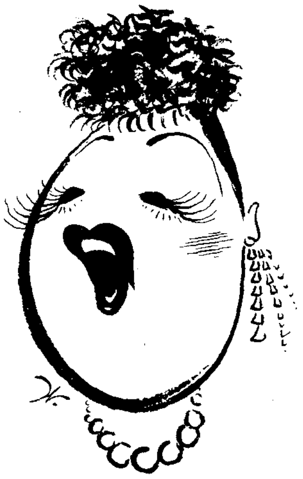
There were to be plenty of other hits in the forties, and a few in the fifties as well, but Cole had changed and the country had changed, and with age and sickness it was harder and harder for him to take in what was happening beyond his high fortress at the Waldorf and his little fortress in Williamstown. For the movie "High Society," besides the title song he wrote "I Love You, Samantha," "You're Sensational," "True Love," and "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" Under the circumstances, it was a remarkable score. The year was 1956, but to Cole it felt like the year 2000.

End with the last song Cole ever wrote. It was for a television musical entitled "Aladdin," broadcast in 1958 and roundly deplored by the critics. The song was supposed to be sung by the Emperor of China, and Cole called it "Wouldn't It Be Fun!" It is an amusing song to us, as it must have been to Cole, because it stands everything he believed in right on its head. Never can Cole have uttered so succinctly and merrily a credo the direct opposite of his own. The song outrageously asks

Wouldn't it be fun not to be famous,
Wouldn't it be fun not to be rich!
Wouldn't it be pleasant
To be a simple peasant
And spend a happy day digging a ditch!
Wouldn't it be fun not to be known as an important VIP,
Wouldn't it be fun to be nearly anyone
Except me, mighty me! ♦

MICHAEL WITTE

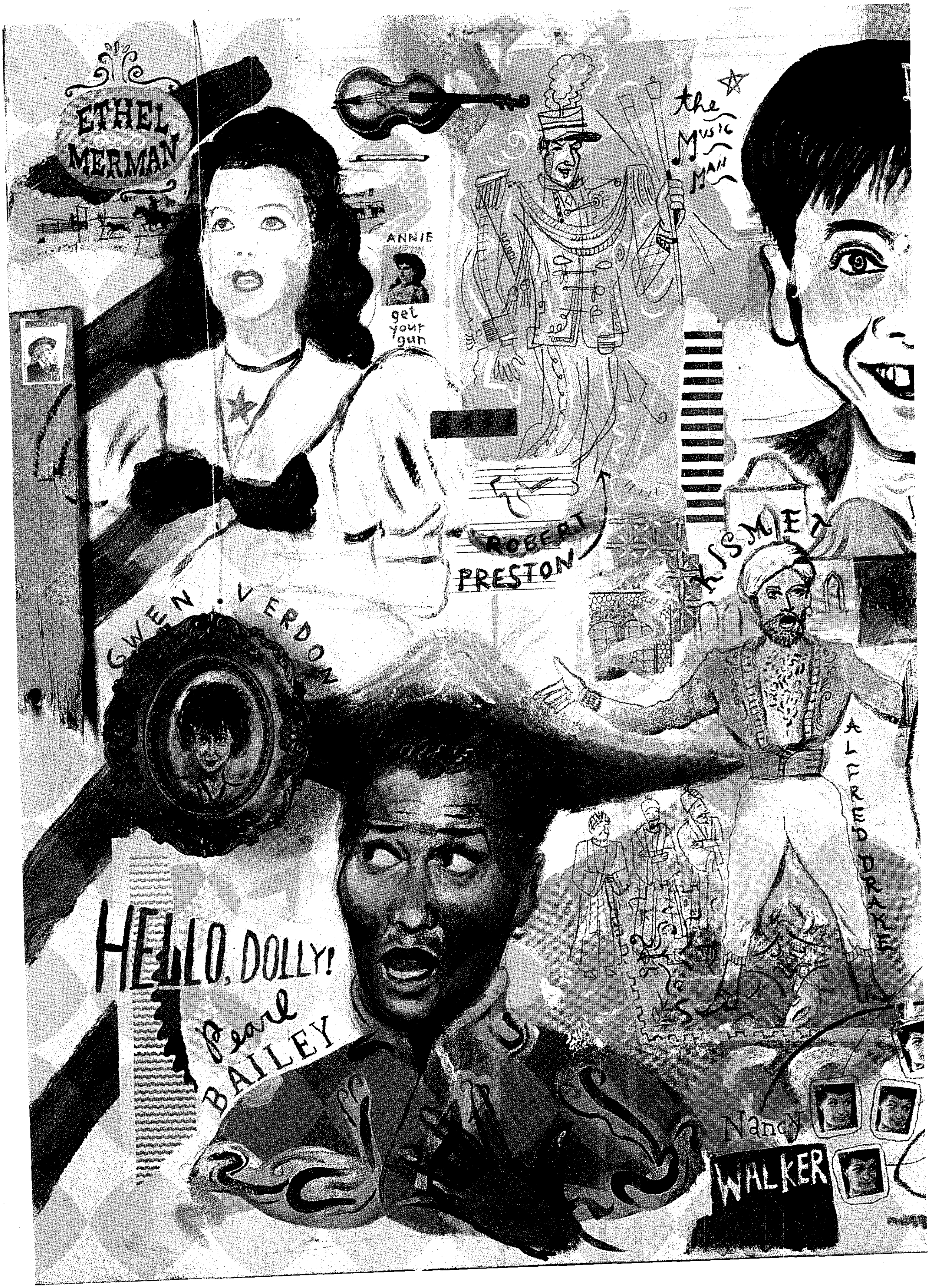
INTERLUDE WITH ETHEL MERMAN

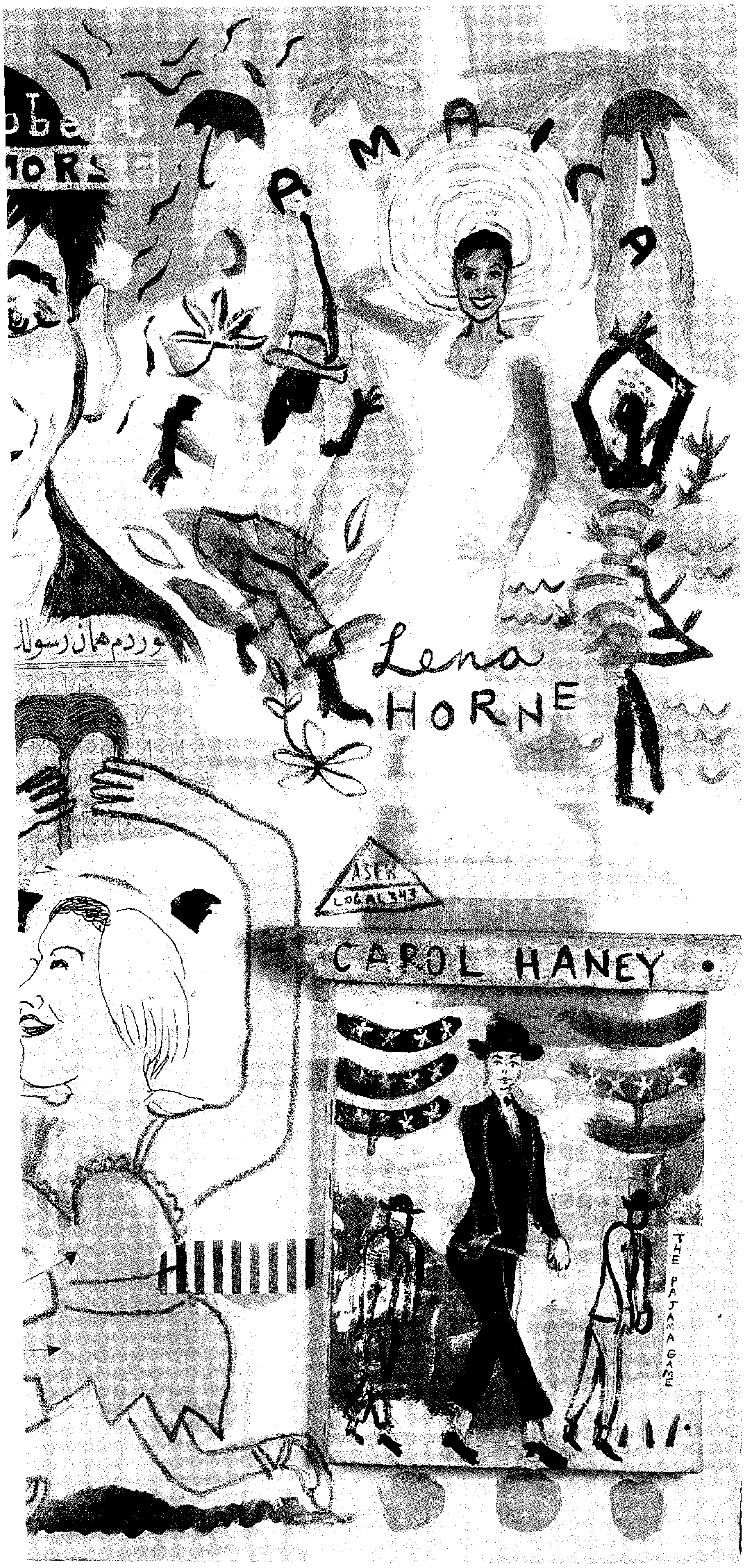


The other day we read an item in one of the gossip columns alleging that Al Siegel, a singing teacher, is writing a book that will severely criticize a good many of his former protégés, including Ethel Merman. We were interested because we found it hard to believe that anyone had ever tried to train Miss Merman's voice, an instrument of untrammelled resonance. To be sure about the matter, we went up to see Miss Merman in her duplex, on Central Park West. A maid ushered us into the library, on the second floor of the apartment, and there was Miss Merman, relaxing on a red leather settee, her face round and bland and her brown hair arranged like the nest of a careless robin. "Hmm," she said when we asked her about Mr. Siegel. "I always had a loud voice. Would you like a drink?" "Never touch it while on duty," we replied. "Me neither," said Miss Merman. "My God!" she went on. "Since 'Annie Get Your Gun' opened, everybody's been after me, which don't think I don't love. I've got so I can tell the story of my life like it was being turned out on a mimeograph." "Turn it out," we suggested. "You asked for it," said Miss Merman. "Well, my dad's an accountant from Astoria, and he likes to play the piano and sing, the same as me. Just natural singing, which is what he enjoyed having me do when I was little. The neighbors used to hear me, of course, and when I was five, a couple of ladies active in the Red Cross got me to sing at Camp Mills, which was my first public appearance."

After that, Miss Merman led an uneventful life in Astoria until she graduated from high school and went to work for the B. K. Vacuum Booster-Brake Company, in Long Island City. "I was secretary to Mr. Caley Bragg, the president," she told us, "and he knew all the big shots intimately. Once, Mr. Bragg gave me a letter of introduction to George White, but all he had was a place in the line, and I wouldn't take it, so I went back to Booster-Brake. I got some club dates, though, while I was with Mr. Bragg, and one time, when I was singing in the Little Russia on Fifty-seventh Street for sixty bucks a week, Lou Irwin, the agent, caught me and signed me up. He got me a six months' contract to do shorts for Warners in their Flatbush studio at two hundred a week, but they let the option lapse. That was O.K. by me, though, because I went right on to the Ambassadeurs in the Winter Garden, and Florida, and the Pavillon Royal at Valley Stream, and Keith's. I went straight from Keith's into 'Girl Crazy' in 1930, and I've been doing fine ever since. Breaks come to me one right after another, don't they?"

We agreed and inquired how Miss Merman liked to be involved in all the shooting that goes on in "Annie Get Your Gun," a standard query for her. "Never shot a gun in my life till the show opened," Miss Merman told us, saying the words as if they'd been rehearsed for a good many interviews. "Scared hell out of me at first, and out of my little daughter, too, when we were up in Boston. She'll be four in July, and she can sing 'Doin' What Comes Naturally,' although she hasn't got any voice to speak of." At this point, a small girl, shy and thin, appeared tentatively at the doorway. "Say hello, Little Bit!" shouted Miss Merman. "Hello," said the girl. "You know what?" Miss Merman said. "I'd like to go up on the roof and let my left lung know what my right one's doing, which will probably startle my constitution, which is like a horse's. Anything else, or is that *alles*?" "*Alles*," we said. —John McCarten


ETHEL MERMAN
ANNIE get your gun
the MUSIC MAN
ROBERT PRESTON
KISMET
GWEN VERDON
ALFRED DRAKE
HELLO, DOLLY!
Pearl BAILEY
Nancy WALKER



SKETCHBOOK
BY JOSH GOSFIELD

SHOWSTOPPERS

THE musical dabbles in the extraordinary. So do its stars, who have the power to drive an audience crazy with delight. We call these terrific moments of accomplishment "showstopping"; but they are also timestopping—ravishing, ineffable epiphanies of high spirits, which walk right off the stage and into the dream life of the nation. Ethel Merman in "Annie Get Your Gun," standing downstage with her hands on her hips and with that freakish voice that could make your back teeth rattle, brought the house down bellowing that anything he can do she can do better. And without a microphone. She was almost as macho as the swaggering Alfred Drake in "Kismet." Lena Horne, a more subtle stylist, teased the white world with her detachment until an audience was "beside itself." In "Jamaica" she made the unacceptable idea of man's insignificance irresistible by gleefully reminding theatregoers that "Napoleon's a pastry, Bismarck is a herring, Alexander's just crème de cocoa mixed with rum, And Herbie Hoover is a vac-u-um." Pearl Bailey didn't even have to sing, although she did. She'd squint at the audience through those heavy-lidded almond eyes, flapping her wrist to take the two thousand or so paying customers into her confidence as Dolly Levi in "Hello, Dolly!" At the finale, when she walked out on the runway, grown men threw down their coats so she could tread on them. People stood on their seats to bravo. I know—I was there. It was me; and I was not alone.

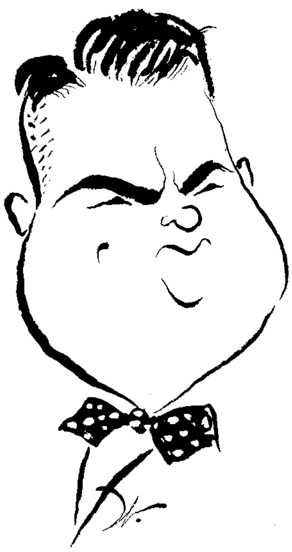
The job of a star is to be sensational: to make us feel the power both of personality and of ideas. The grimacing and glorious Nancy Walker attempting a pas de deux in George Abbott's "Look, Ma, I'm Dancin' " and the gamine Carol Haney creating "Steam Heat" in "The Pajama Game" remain part of the iconography of a century's happiness. These showstoppers renovated life and made it memorable. No wonder society put their names in lights and paid them handsomely. They produced that rarest of commodities: joy. —JOHN LAHR

CAMEO

HAPPY TALK

Oscar Hammerstein, with Richard Rodgers, blasted away the old show-biz formula "No girls, no gags, no chance" and replaced it with musicals in which words and music served the story, not just the star.

BY PHILIP HAMBURGER



OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II, the lyricist, librettist, and producer, went to the theatre for the first time when he was four years old. He considers the preceding years of his life a total loss. Now a robustly successful showman of fifty-five, Hammerstein recalls his initial glimpse of the mysteries and enticements of the stage with the mixed clarity and fuzziness of the possessed. He was alone in a box overlooking the stage. The auditorium was crowded. As the house lights were lowered, a hush came over the audience. The orchestra began to play, and the curtain went up. Oscar broke out in a cold sweat. His legs trembled. His stomach quivered. His excitement was so acute that he could barely see what was happening onstage. Actually, nothing much *was* happening. Several young ladies were posed around a large, tangled fish net. A bright, golden haze filled the stage. The girls, it seemed, were drying the net. One of them, disengaging herself from the others, stepped to the footlights and sang what he remembers as:

> Oh, I am a water maiden,
> I live on the water,
> A fisherman's daughter.

Oscar was transported. The mist before his eyes was like a London fog. After the maidens performed a short dance, other acts came on, but Oscar recalls nothing more until intermission, when his father fetched him from the box and said, "Now we'll go backstage." He was led down some narrow stairs, through a dark doorway, and up a few steps; he then found himself backstage, and face to face with a large cage. The cage was occupied by a lion. The lion was prowling up and down, and did not look especially happy. As Oscar was watching it, the cage began to roll toward him. He was too stunned to move. The lion let out a roar, and Oscar was snatched to safety by a stagehand. Other stagehands rushed forward to stop the cage. Oscar felt that he just might get sick to his stomach, and asked his father to take him home. When he reached home, his mother put him to bed. He slept for fourteen hours, and when he awoke, he announced that the theatre would be his lifework.

Hammerstein has spectacularly stuck to his word. He has been associated with more notable musicals than any other showman in the history of American theatre. He has either written the book and lyrics or collaborated on the book and lyrics for some forty musicals, including "Rose-Marie," "The Desert Song," "Sunny," "Show Boat," "Oklahoma!," "Carousel," "Allegro," "South Pacific," and "The King and I." Of these, at least three—"Show Boat," "Oklahoma!," and "South Pacific"—have been called classics of the American musical stage so many times and in so many places that today they can categorically be described as classics of the American musical stage.

HAMMERSTEIN feels that the severest test of how a show is working out comes the moment the first-act curtain falls. Just before this moment, Hammerstein leans forward and cups a hand to one ear, then stiffens like a bird dog. "If that curtain drops and there is silence followed by silence—oh, we're in *trouble!*" he says. "If that curtain falls and there is silence followed swiftly by an excited buzz of conversation, a sort of ground swell of buzzy talk, we're probably safe." After only a minute or two of such listening, he rushes into the lobby. There, head down, he mixes in with the crowd. "I concentrate on a man and woman who spy another man and woman they know," he says. "If one pair approaches the other and says a few quick words about the play, and then there's general conversation about the play, we're O.K. If they merely say, 'Pretty good first act. When are you and Mary coming over for bridge?,' we're in *real* trouble!" Hammerstein slips back into the theatre after the intermission and is on the alert for the glow. If the customers are enjoying a show, he feels, an indefinable glow comes over their faces. He thinks that the glow is even more important during the second act. "If they glow when they get back into their seats," he says, "the chances are that the glow is permanent and we have 'em for good." Hammerstein feels the glow induced by "Oklahoma!" may never be duplicated within his lifetime or anybody else's. "People returned to their seats for the second act and the glow was like the light from a thousand lanterns," he says. "You could *feel* the glow, it was that bright."

A MAN'S lyrics, Hammerstein feels, are a reflection of his attitude toward life. "I couldn't write a sophisticated or sharp lyric, or something terribly, terribly clever, like some lyric writers," he once told a friend. "I couldn't, because I don't see things that way. To me, one of the most beautiful and expressive lyrics of all time is Irving Berlin's simple 'All alone, by the telephone.' Examine those words. Think about them. They tell an entire story. Nothing more needs to be said. You see the picture, complete and whole. All alone by the telephone—the girl jilted perhaps, lonely, unhappy, waiting for the phone to ring. I envy those who can write tricky words, but they are a different sort of man."

Uppermost in Hammerstein's mind while he is writing a lyric is the larynx of the performer who will have to stand on

MICHAEL WITTE

a stage and sing the thing. “The larynxes of singers are limited,” he has remarked. He tries to provide convenient breathing places in his lyrics, and to avoid climaxes in which a singer will be straining at a word that closes the larynx. “A word like ‘sweet’ would be a very bad word on which to sing a high note,” he says. “The ‘e’ sound closes the larynx, and the singer cannot let go with his full voice. Furthermore, the ‘t’ ending the word is a hard consonant, which would cut the singer off and thwart his and the composer’s desire to sustain the note.” Hammerstein worries a good deal about closed larynxes, and he is inclined to brood morbidly over the times he has permitted his affection for a word to outweigh his concern over a closed larynx. For example, he often berates himself for ending the refrain of “What’s the Use of Wond’rin’?,” in “Carousel,” with “You’re his girl and he’s your feller, And all the rest is talk.” He feels that if he were to write this song again, his last line would go something like “And that’s all you need to know.” “The singer could have hit the ‘o’ vowel and held it as long as she wanted to, eventually pulling applause,” he says. The song was not a distinguished success as sheet music or on records, and Hammerstein is convinced that the word “talk,” which closed the singer’s larynx at the finish, was responsible for this. The majority of his last lines are, he feels, forceful larynx-openers, conducive to applause-pulling, such as “Oh, what a beautiful day!,” “Once you have found her, never let her go!,” “Ol’ man river, he jes keeps rollin’ along,” and “Bali Ha’i, Bali Ha’i, Bali Ha’i.”

“I learned a lot about timing from watching Ed Wynn, and Otto Harbach taught me a great lesson, too. He used to say, ‘When you write a song, think of a boy and a girl dancing together and try to express what the boy is trying to express to the girl.’ And Max Gordon taught me a valuable truth. He always says, ‘The curtain goes up and two people are out on the stage, and somebody better say something pretty damn fast!’ Oh, I love life and I’m in great shape and my mind is blooming, but I know that the life span is still threescore and ten. I’m only temperamental about writing lyrics, nothing else, and it hurts that here I am fifty-five and I’m just learning my craft.” ♦

GERARD NICOLAS

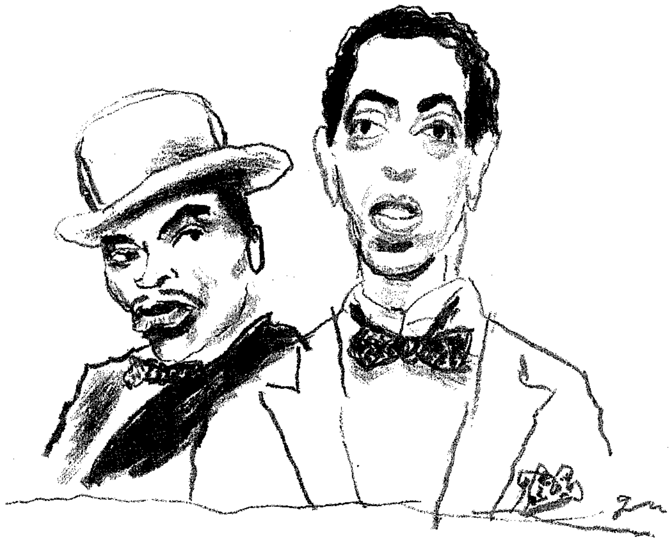
INTERLUDE 1992
“JELLY’S LAST JAM”

“Jelly’s Last Jam,” which opened last week at the Virginia, could well become a Broadway landmark. Written and directed by George C. Wolfe, who was also responsible for “The Colored Museum,” it is both a celebration of the music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an ironic, tough evocation of the complex, embittered, and anything but heroic man who wrote and played that music. The show could also be considered a star vehicle, for the performance of Gregory Hines transcends the boundaries of the musical; his astonishing talent as a dancer is matched by his talent for acting, as he portrays this often cruel and self-defeating man. Born in New Orleans of Creole stock, Morton was boastful, frequently contemptible in his racist denials of his own blackness, and never less than a genius; glancing at Mr. Hines’ face, one can see Morton’s suffering and his incapacity for happiness, along with his gloating at his accomplishment.

The action begins on the night of Jelly’s death. As he stands at the brink of Heaven or Hell, someone called Chimney Man (Keith David), huge and in a top hat, takes charge, acknowledging him and delivering a roll call of other great men of jazz. Then we go back to Jelly’s boyhood—the part of young Jelly is played and danced to perfection by young Savion Glover—and to his beginnings as a jazz pianist, in the brothels of Storyville, and on to his later career, in Los Angeles and Chicago, where he formed his own band, the Red Hot Peppers. The other characters, also well cast, include a blues singer, Miss Mamie (Mary Bond Davis), and an astringent grandmother (Ann Duquesnay), who disinherits Jelly for betraying his Creole heritage. Stanley Wayne Mathis is Jack the Bear, Jelly’s best friend, whom he eventually humiliates, and beautiful Tonya Pinkins is Anita, a singer with whom Jelly lived.

The always invaluable Luther Henderson has adapted Morton’s music, and contributed music of his own to bind it to the occasion. Susan Birkenhead wrote the apt lyrics. The extraordinary scenery is by Robin Wagner, as lighted by Jules Fisher; the costumes, by Toni-Leslie James, are not only decorative but always appropriate—they are *clothes*. Hope Clark, the inventive choreographer, deserves a review all to herself. The book, strong enough to justify the narrative and characters, the music and the emotions, is Mr. Wolfe’s accomplishment. There has never been anything like it, on or off Broadway.

—Edith Oliver



Oct. 25, 1952

THE NEW YORKER

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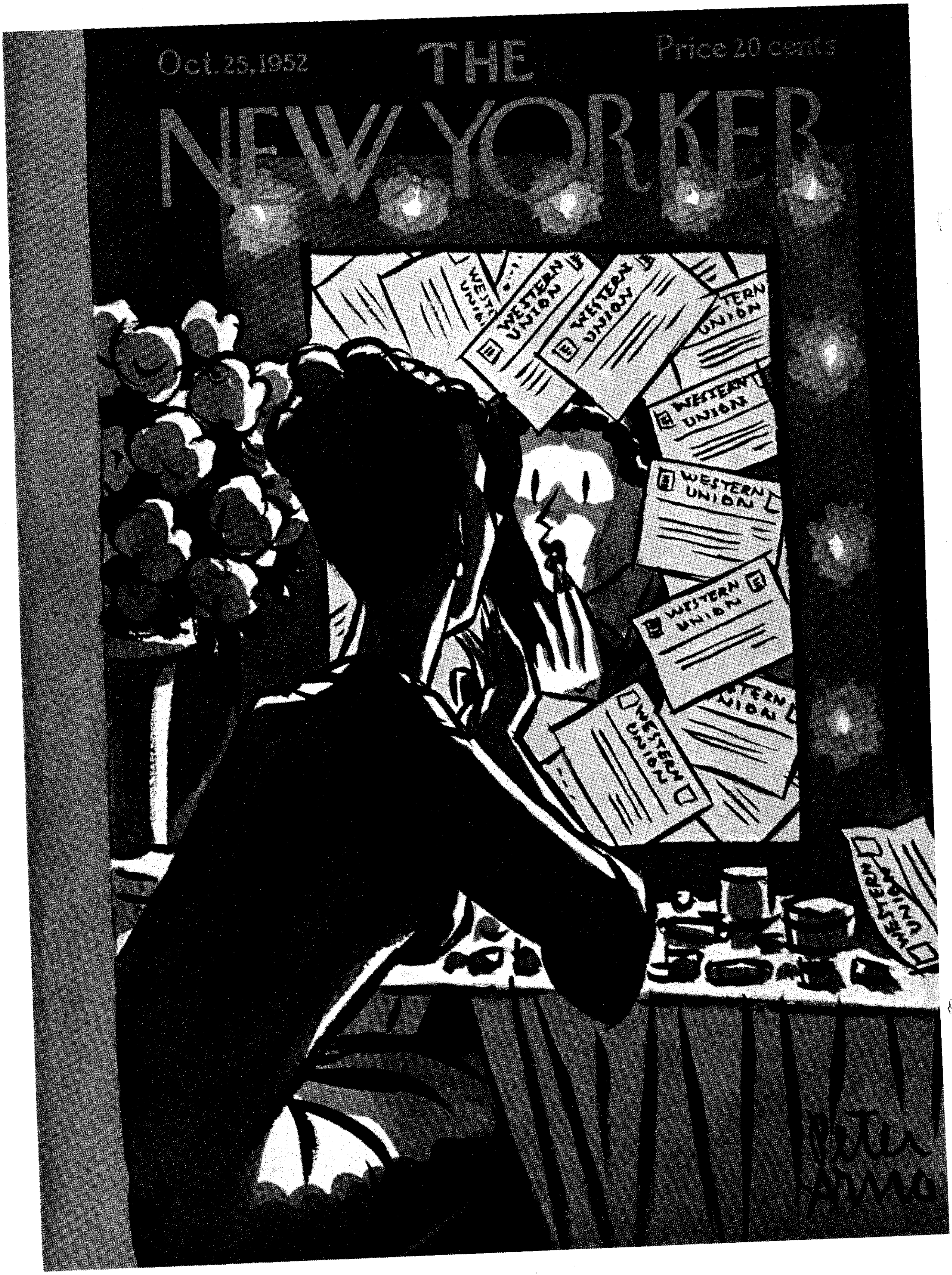
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Peter Arno

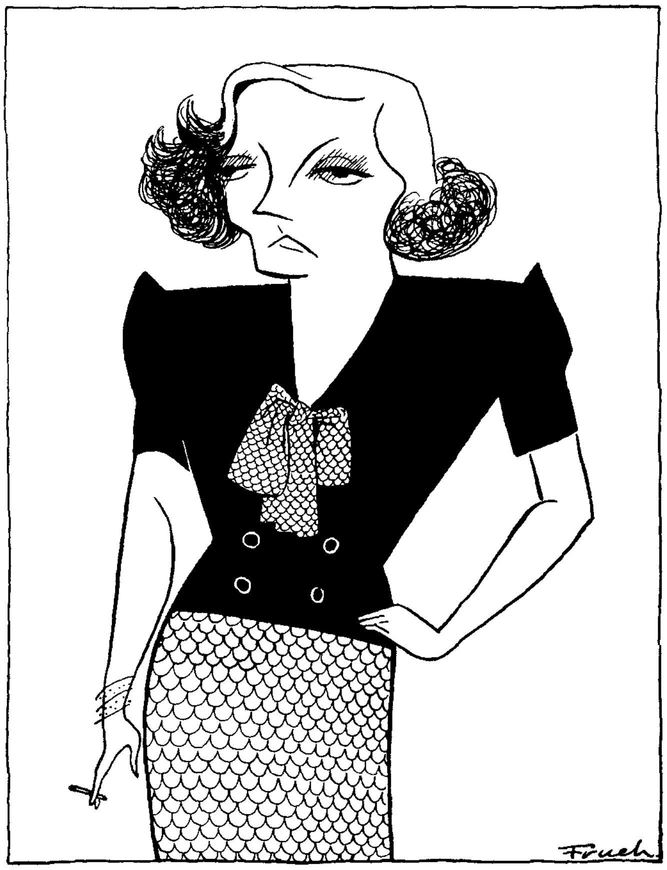
STAR TURN

DAHLING!

Tallulah Bankhead starred in key plays by Hellman, Wilder, Coward, Cocteau, and Williams. Her big talent, her big personality, and her big mouth made her one of the most unforgettable actresses of her time.

BY BRENDAN GILL

SHE was a strange one, and no mistake. Her needs were many and outrageous and unappeasable. Sometimes they coincided with her appetites and sometimes not. She despised hypocrisy, and her willingness to let the unconventional episodes of her private life be made public was a way of asserting that she had nothing to hide, nothing of which to be ashamed, nothing for which to feel remorse. Despite her remarkable intelligence, she may have believed this to be true. The violent scatological energy of her speech and the celebrated speed and frequency with which she shucked off her clothes and prowled about naked were intended to convey an impression of untrammelled emotional freedom, and the impression was false. The chances she took were extreme and necessary, and were readily misunderstood. She respected and disliked the theatre and gave up her life to it, but the common view of her, which she encouraged, was that she was somehow an undisciplined outsider, a gifted amateur, who drank too much and talked too much and turned cartwheels onstage for want of something more professional to do. The facts were otherwise. In the course of her career, she appeared in over fifty plays and over twenty movies; she travelled scores of thousands of miles with road companies and in summer stock, by train, plane, bus, and station wagon (she said once of "Private Lives," "We have played this show everywhere except under water"); and she made uncounted hundreds of personal appearances in night clubs and on radio and TV shows. Year after year, she worked. Indeed, she may have worked harder than any of her fellow-actresses of the period, though she took care to conceal her drudging. She liked to be thought a party girl and a scapegrace, and she had reasons.



ALFRED J. FRUEH

The restless life force with which she was born was always ravenously seeking something worthy of containing it, or, with luck, consuming it, and the search was nearly always in vain. Howard Dietz's remark to the effect that a day away from Tallulah was like a month in the country was clever and just, but even at the moment of laughing at it one couldn't fail to wonder how such a remark must have struck its prompter. What was she to do with the thing she had become? She *was* different, and not alone in respect to her talent and vitality. She flailed about in paroxysms of disguised bewilderment, drinking and clowning and cursing and showing off. She was valiant and silly, and she knew it. But she was not rubbishy, and she knew that, too. Out of exceptional qualities, she invented by trial and error an exceptional self, which with a child's impudent pretense of not caring she flung straight into the face of the world. Caught off guard, the world flinched and applauded, and it went on applauding to the end.

A FRIEND who once tested with a stopwatch Tallulah's average flow of words per minute estimated that the daily total came to just under seventy thousand, which is the equivalent of a short novel; on a long weekend she could approach without strain the wordage of "War and Peace." If the quantity of words that Tallulah spoke was astonishing, still more astonishing was the voice she spoke them in. Over a period of twenty or thirty years, it became perhaps the most readily identifiable voice in the world. Thanks to her movie, radio, and TV appearances, its curious sound, at first hearing not unmistakably the voice of a woman, was familiar to tens of millions of people, and it was a sorry comic who in the shabbiest small-town night club could not provide an imitation of it capable of being instantly recognized and applauded. The voice was extraordinarily low, sweet, and husky, and the columnist John Crosby wrote of it that it had more timbre than Yellowstone National Park. It seemed to possess its own humid tropical climate; one felt drawn to it and warmed by it, and birds and animals found it every bit as irresistible as human beings did. Ever an ardent amateur pathologist, Tallulah attributed its low register to the variety of diseases she suffered during the first six years of her life; by her reckoning, these in-

"Didn't we get sopped the last time we went to 'Tony n' Tina's Wedding'?"

• •

cluded tonsillitis, whooping cough, croup, measles, mumps, pneumonia, and smallpox. Whatever the cause of the voice, its effects were immediate and uncanny. Audiences sat smiling at it and basking in it, and the lines it spoke, which might be in the best drawing-room English of Pinero, Maugham, Barry, or Coward, would have proved equally satisfactory if they had been in Choctaw.

Surprisingly, in the light of her reputation as an amorist, Tallulah's voice, unlike Garbo's, Dietrich's, or Marilyn Monroe's, was not erotic. Sensual without being strongly sexual, it stopped short of promising everything for love. Instead, it remained ribald and uncommitted, as if, provoked by some suddenly observed incongruity of mind and body, it might dissolve at any moment into mocking laughter. Humor is the enemy of the erotic, and Tallulah was invincibly humorous, and even clownlike. The voice hinted that when it was at its sexiest it was performing, like Mae West's voice, a parody of the real thing. Tallulah had given her voice little formal training, and, although its range was great, she often ran out of breath along the way to the first convenient resting place, and a roaring fortissimo might end in an uncalculated hoarse whisper.

Tallulah could not sing, but she liked to try, and in the opinion of many critics the sound that emerged was more attractive than singing. There are a number of recordings of Tallulah's non-singing, and one senses in them both her pleasure in the music and her nervous scrambling to get on key and stay there. An unexpected hint of sadness revealed itself when she non-sang; she was threatened, her wavering voice said, with some unnameable, unbearable loss. She made a recording of "Bye, Bye, Blackbird" so charged with emotion that it came closer to proving a true autobiography than the one she published. "Make my bed, light the light, I'll be home late tonight"—the words, warbled in a passionate and absurd baritone, were heartbreaking. "No one here can love and understand me, always hard luck stories they all hand me." She could utter such words only in song; otherwise they were outside her code of the permissible.

To begin with, Tallulah's accent had been unmistakably Alabamian, and she could always restore it to its full moonlight-and-magnolia strength. During her long stay in London, she overlaid her Southern accent with hints of the fashionable Mayfair accent that she was herself engaged in helping to invent. A word that was continuously on her lips—"darling"—contrived to display both accents at once. The "r" that had never been sounded in Jasper was not sounded in London, the "a," sufficiently broad at home, in England grew broader still. Having made her first name famous, Tallulah was soon making "darling" famous as well. In newspaper and magazine interviews, it amounted to a trademark and was always spelled as close as the writer could come to the way she pronounced it—"dahling," or even "d-a-a-h-ling." The favored word crept up out of the story into the subhead and then into the headline; sometimes it would take the place of "Tallulah" and render it unnecessary. If it was remarkable for a young woman to have made her first name celebrated enough to provide an immediate identification of her in most cities of both hemispheres, it was even more remarkable that she could make a common appellation of affection—one used by millions—so much her own that it could not conceivably be mistaken for anyone else's. The world came to know that when the word "dahling" appeared in a headline, it meant that Tallulah was in town and in spate, unstoppably showing off.

THERE are people who are extravagant but not generous; Tallulah was both. Giving for her was a means of reassurance as great as getting. She dispensed her money as she dispensed her favors—on precisely the same impulse and to gain the same ends. People came to think of her as a soft touch, and they sometimes took advantage of what they considered a weakness, but the weakness was in fact a form of strength; the giver remained in perfect control. Once, in New York, a young playwright down on his luck begged the loan of a couple of hundred dollars. Knowing that the sum was a trifle to Tallulah, he was astonished when she burst into tears. "*Don't* ask me for it, dahling," she said. "Ah, *please* don't ask me for it. You're the only person left who hasn't borrowed money from me." ♦

CRITICS' ROUND TABLE

WOLCOTT GIBBS

A short-story writer, an editor, and the author of a hit Broadway comedy, "Season in the Sun," Gibbs, beginning in 1933, wrote drama criticism for The New Yorker for twenty-five years.

"A Streetcar Named Desire," by Tennessee Williams, is a fine and deeply disturbing play, almost faultless in the physical details of its production and the quality of its acting. It is hard to define it very satisfactorily for those who haven't seen it. Most of us at one time or another have come on some incident in the street, some scene of senseless brutality or intolerable humiliation, that struck us inescapably as the last act in a life. Usually, of course, we were mistaken, since the real climaxes are almost never identifiable, but still it gave the imagination, especially if literary, something to wrestle with, and often we got home with quite a story worked out in our heads. Mr. Williams' play might easily be the triumphant product of just such an experience. The last scene shows a woman being led away from a crumbling house in a nightmare street. She is not young, being in her middle thirties, but she is still handsome and she has a certain amount of style—Old South, as it happens, but still style—both in her manner and her dress. It would not be necessary to identify the two people with her as a doctor and an asylum attendant for anyone to see that she is quite mad. Obviously, any explanation for such a moment, for such a coincidence of smiling insanity—she is clearly delighted with her companions—and ruined elegance and unspeakable squalor, is faced with the danger of seeming either hopelessly or absurdly melodramatic. All I can say is that Mr. Williams has written a strong, wholly believable play that, starting in a low key, mounts slowly and inexorably to its shocking climax. I think it is an imperfect play, but it is certainly the most impressive one that has turned up this season, and I wouldn't be surprised if it was a sounder and more mature work than "The Glass Menagerie," the author's previous compliment to Southern womanhood.

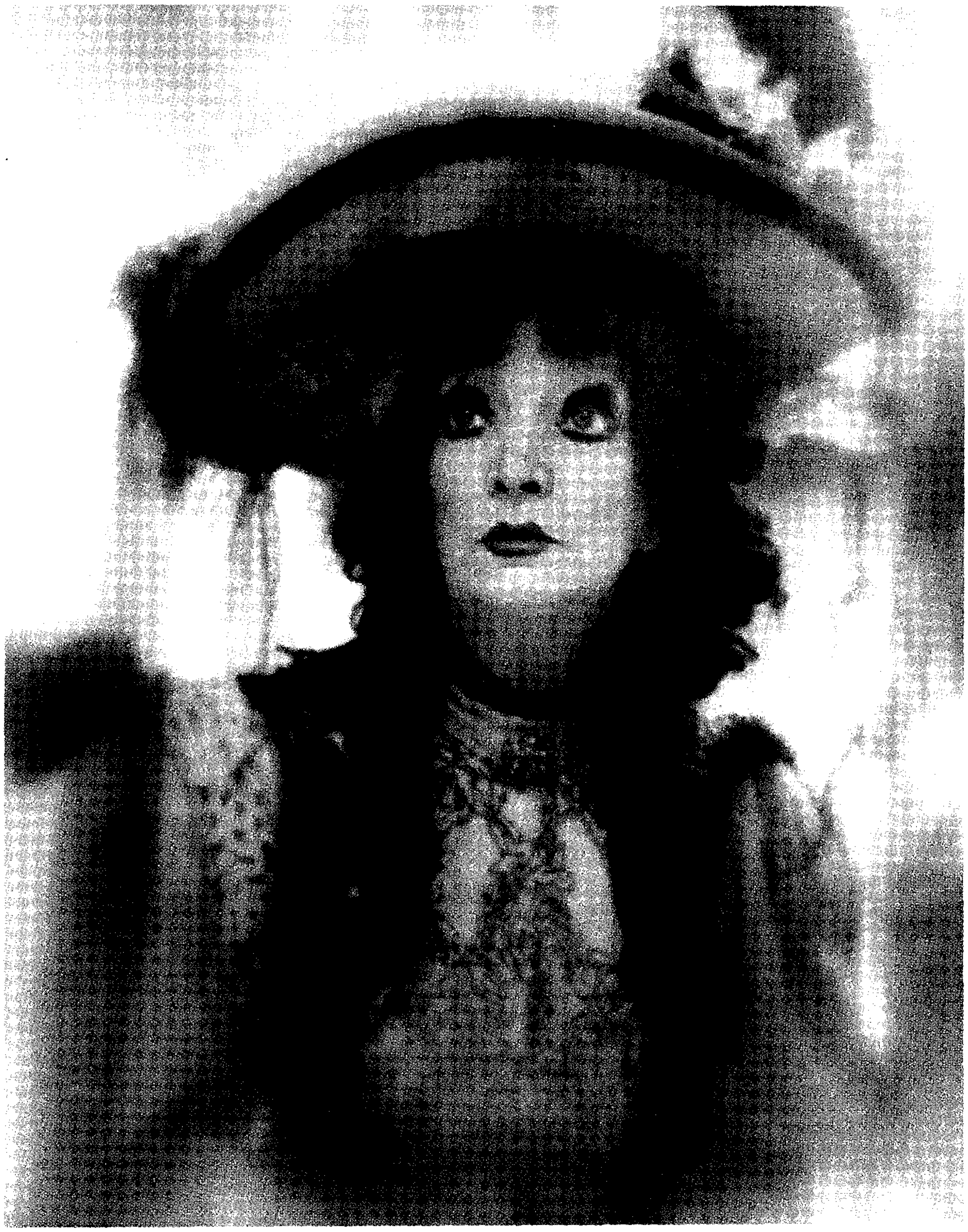
After all that, I'm sorry to say there isn't much room left for the compliments to the cast, though God knows they, and, of course, Elia Kazan, their director, deserve all I can offer them. Briefly, Jessica Tandy gives a superb, steadily rising performance as Blanche. Marlon Brando, as Kowalski, is almost pure ape (his sister-in-law's description of him as "common" entertained me quite a lot there in the dark), and though he undoubtedly emphasizes the horrors of the Vieux Carré as opposed to Belle Rêve, it is a brutally effective characterization. Karl Malden, as Blanche's unhappy suitor, gets a queer, touching blend of dignity and pathos into what you might call one of those difficult, *listening* parts, and Kim Hunter, as Stella, is sympathetic and restrained and very decorative indeed. The others, representing the inhabitants of that abandoned district, all seemed admirable and awful to me.

It would be interesting, though probably not terribly interesting, to know what a playgoer of generally correct taste but no information at all about the American theatre would make of John Barrymore in "My Dear Children." Here, some such hypothetical critic might say, is a man approximately sixty years old, of classic though damaged appearance, giving a rather ridiculous performance in a play that really has no particular business on the stage. Observing an occasional trace of grandeur in Mr. Barrymore's behavior, he might want to qualify that a little. On the whole, it *is* a ridiculous performance, he would say, but there are obviously hints that this fossil has been an actor of considerable ability, in whom the technique is still both instinctive and highly developed. Even given this qualification, though, how he would account for the hilarious reception accorded Mr. Barrymore and his simple-minded vehicle I can't imagine.

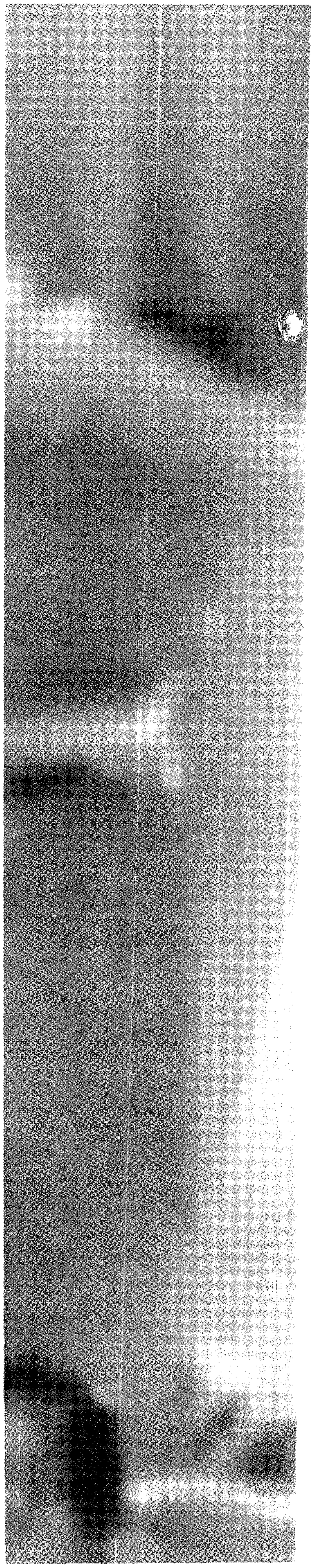
It is a useless speculation in any case, since there can scarcely be an adult in North America who doesn't know Mr. Barrymore almost as intimately as the family doctor knows his oldest and most bothersome patient. The great man comes on the stage of the Belasco trailing a thousand anecdotes, familiar from Bangor to Pasadena. He is love, alcohol, beauty, and the heir of a dramatic tradition going back, it often seems, to the Old Testament. He can (and does) act in a way that appears to be a vicious parody of Mr. Walter Hampden, and the audience watches him with boundless delight. Half of this effect lies in simply being a Barrymore and therefore presumably engaged in something supernatural; the other half lies in a very carefully fostered reputation for doing the unexpected.

In this second category, I'm sorry to say, Mr. Barrymore let his first-night admirers down miserably. The manner was all Barrymore, but, with the exception of a few interpolated lines that I could have improved on myself, there was nothing unexpected—or nothing, at least, until the show had moved on to Féfé's Monte Carlo. In the company surrounding me, this was generally regarded as a gyp. These fashionable people had come, on the whole, in the same spirit they would have gone to a wrestling match. They understood that the show was fixed, and if the star couldn't actually be tight, as advertised by his press agent, they certainly expected him to pretend he was. Mr. Barrymore did nothing of the kind. He threw in a few writhings and grimaces, but he didn't fall down and he remembered his lines perfectly, which was quite a feat since they are among the least memorable lines ever written. The whole thing was very disappointing, and it was a tribute to his past notoriety and present charm that he got the greatest ovation of the season without so much as throwing an actress at a critic.

Because of the interlocking nature of Mr. Barrymore's private and professional lives, it is hard to say just who will be in the cast of "My Dear Children" by the time this reaches print, although it seems likely that the fourth Mrs. Barrymore, a young woman of remarkable tenacity of purpose and almost no reticence, will have supplanted Miss Doris Dudley in one of the leading rôles. ♦



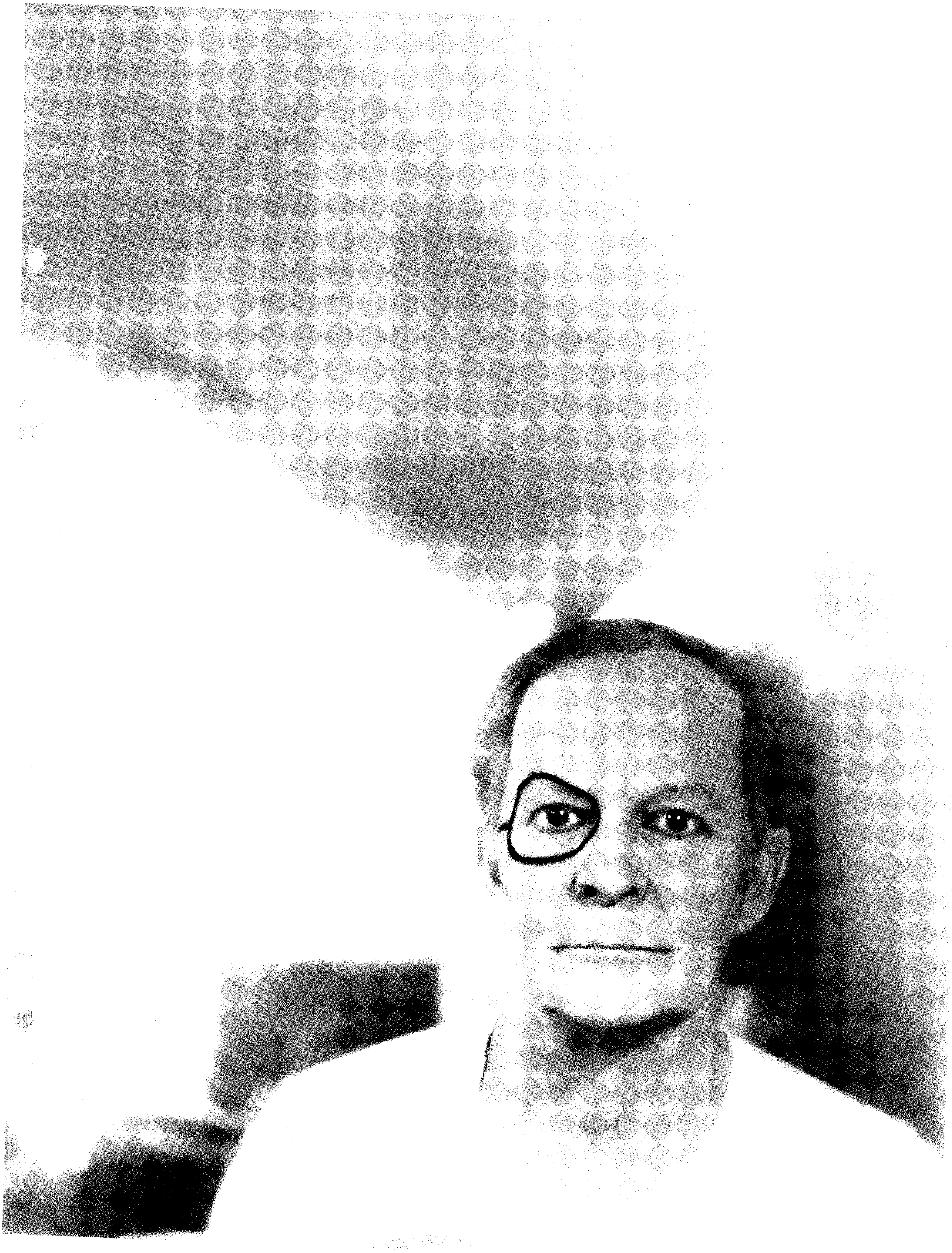
Estelle Winwood, in Jean Giraudoux's "The Madwoman of Chaillot," New York City, February 18, 1949.



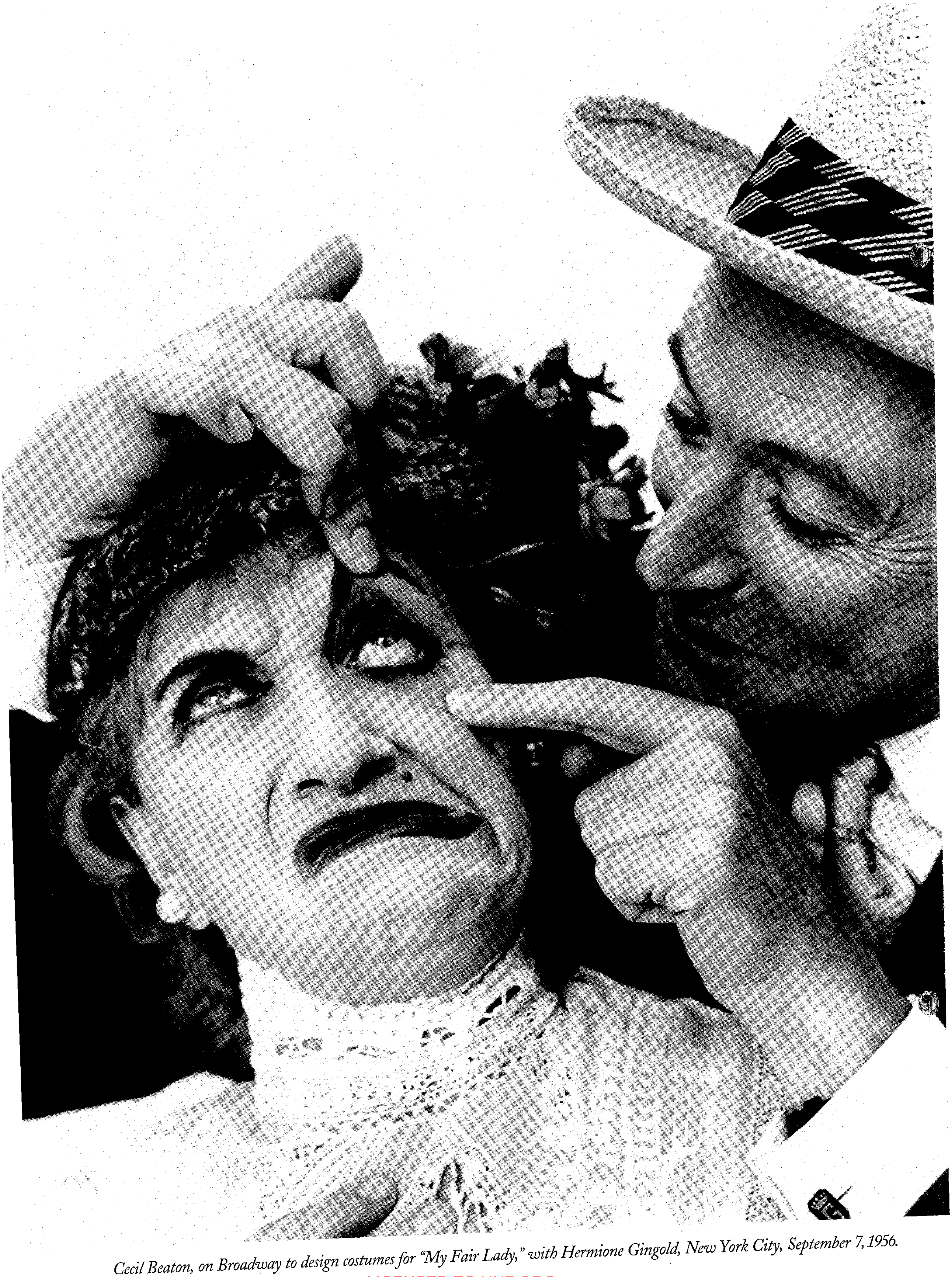
PORTFOLIO

SHOW PEOPLE

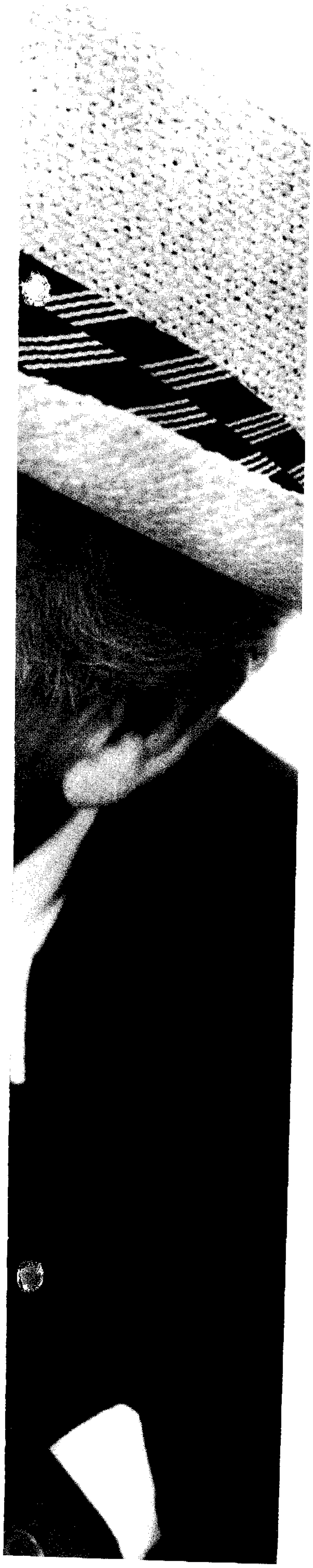
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

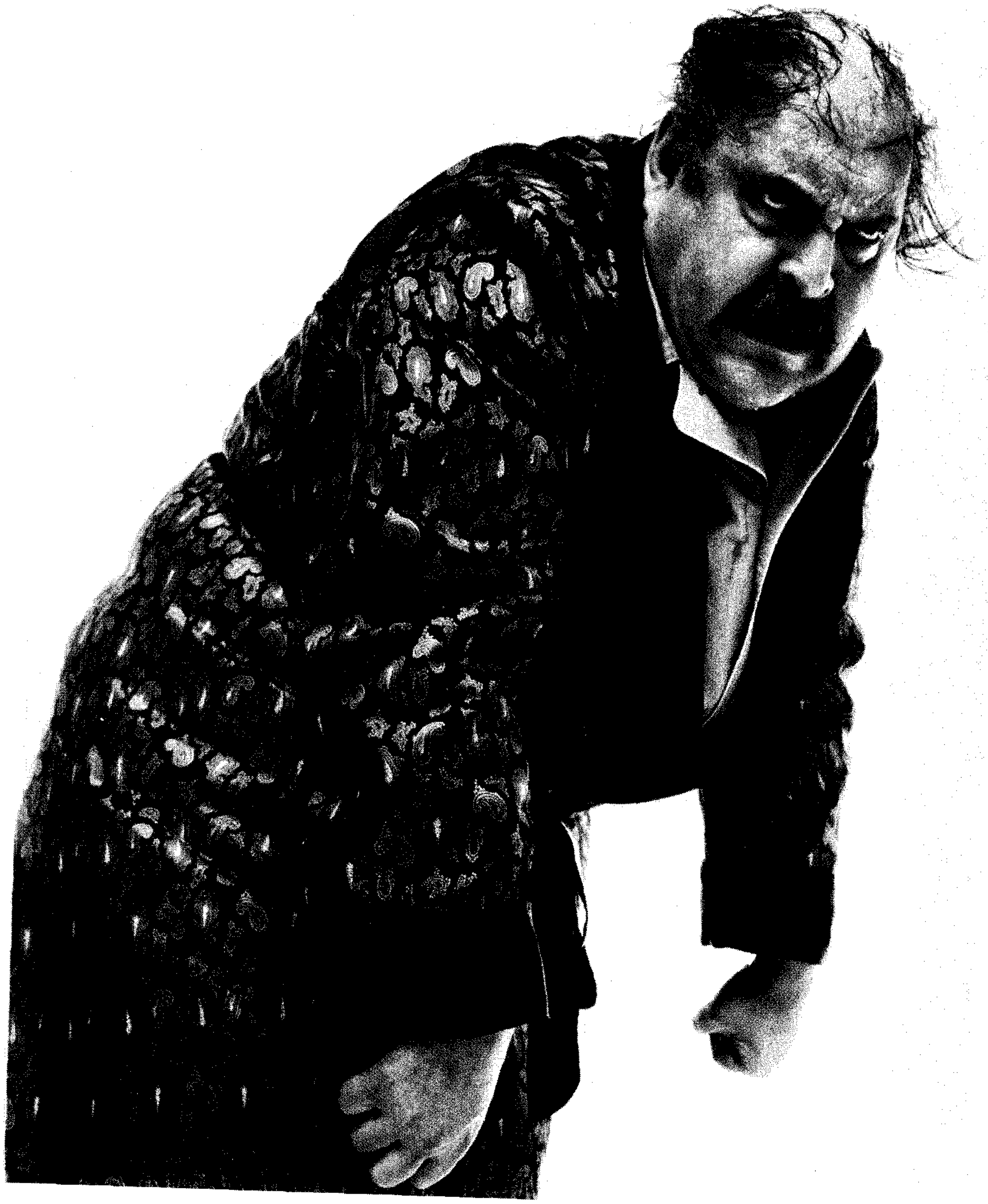


Bobby Clark, backstage before a performance of "As the Girls Go," New York City, December 26, 1948.

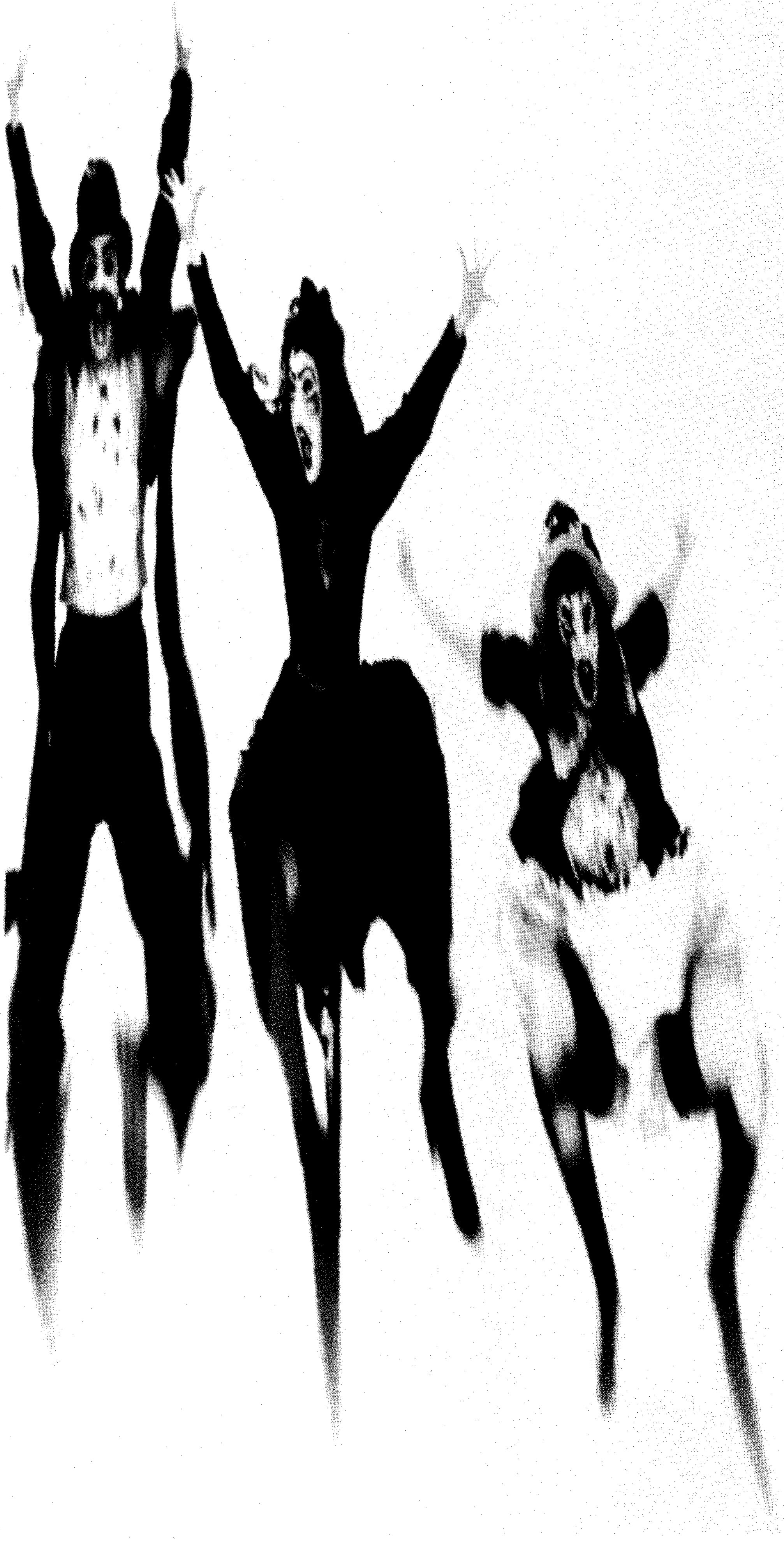


Cecil Beaton, on Broadway to design costumes for "My Fair Lady," with Hermione Gingold, New York City, September 7, 1956.

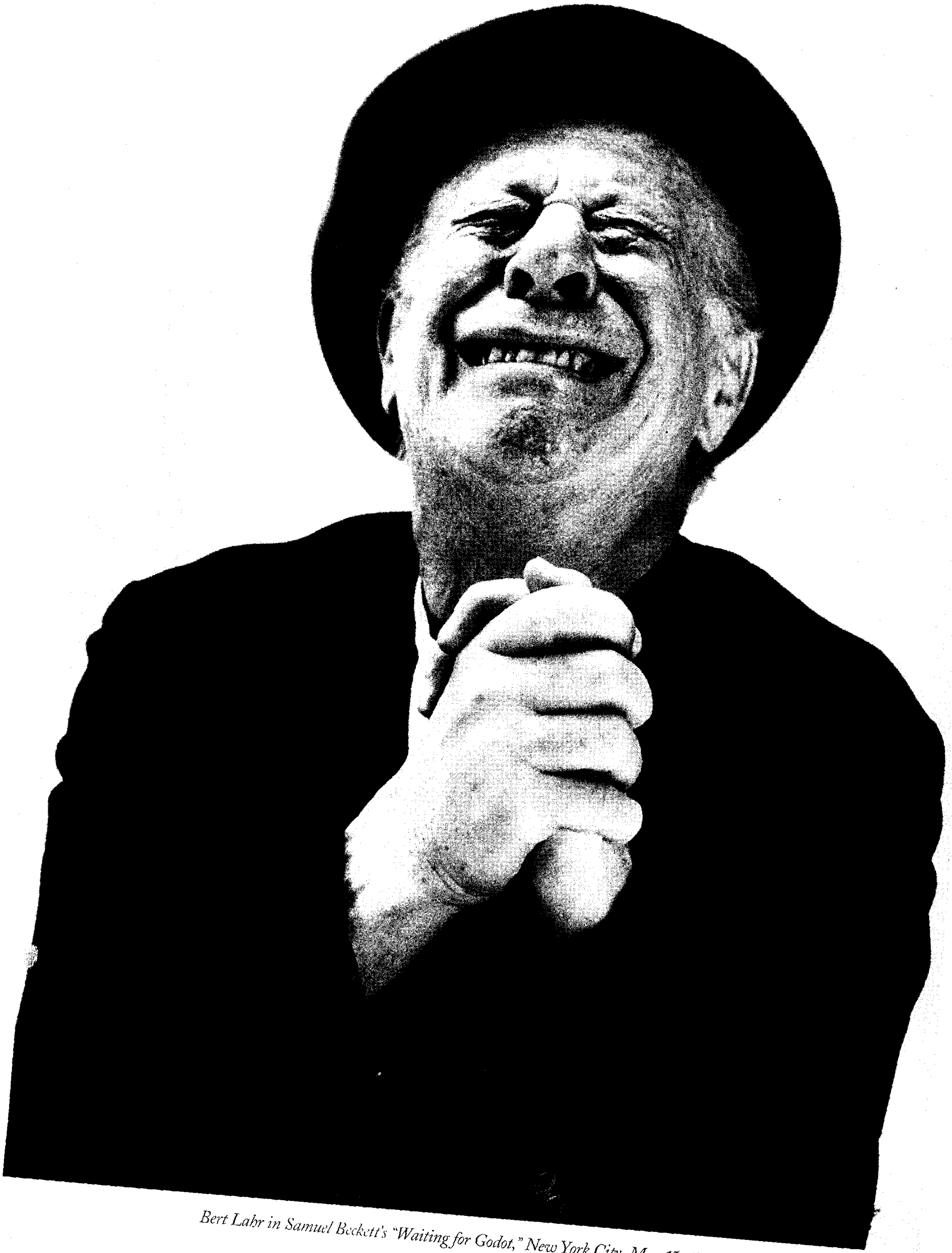




Zero Mostel, in Eugène Ionesco's "Rhinoceros," New York City, April 15, 1961



Jerome Robbins' "Bathing Beach Ballet" from "High Button Shoes," New York City, October 20, 1947.



Bert Lahr in Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot," New York City, May 15, 1956.

ANNALS OF SHOW BUSINESS

THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

In this 1939 Profile, A. J. Liebling, The New Yorker's boxing correspondent, reported on two Broadway heavyweights: Lee and J. J. Shubert, creators of the Shubert Organization, Shubert Alley, and the Shubert brush-off.

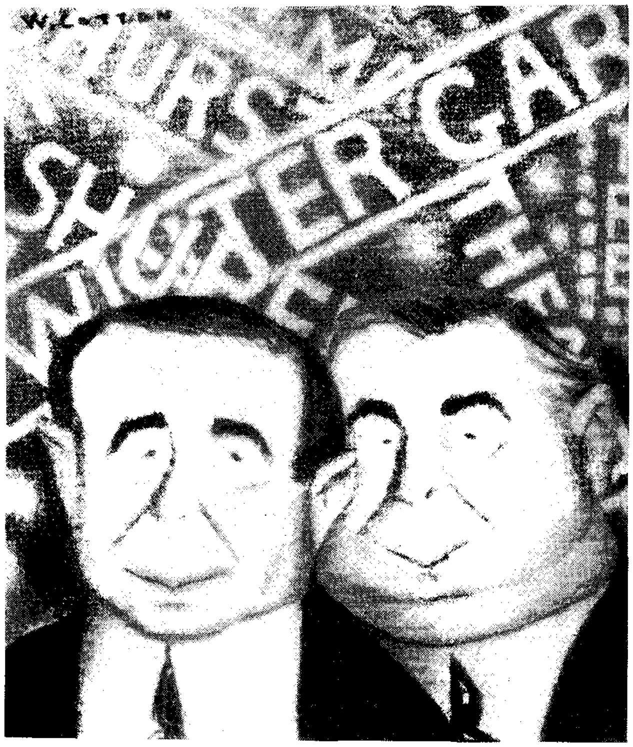
THE Messrs. Shubert have been the largest operators in the New York theatre for so long that only a few persons remember that they were once boy wonders in Syracuse, where both of them were running theatres before they had reached their twenties. City records in Syracuse show that Lee was born there sixty-four years ago and J. J. five years later, but the brothers still have the brisk and querulous quality of two combative small boys who feel the teacher is down on them. A few years ago they addressed a manifesto to New York dramatic editors, insisting that they be referred to by the collective designation of "the Messrs. Shubert." "Lee and Jake," they felt, sounded much too flippant. Lee takes a quiet pride in being known as the fastest walker on Broadway. He walks fast even when he doesn't know where he is going. J. J. is distinguished for his bitter vehemence at rehearsals. "There is only one captain on this ship," he once shouted while rehearsing a musical, "the director and me!"

When Lee, in his office in the Shubert Theatre, wishes to communicate with J. J., in the Sardi Building, he summons Jack Morris, his secretary, and says, "Take a letter to Mr. J. J." When J. J. wishes to communicate with Lee, he says to his secretary, "Take a letter to Mr. Lee." This custom has given rise to a theatre-district legend that the brothers are mortal enemies and do not speak at all. The legend is not founded on fact. When either of the Shuberts is really in a hurry to discuss something with the other, he walks across the street to do so. An even more fanciful theory has it that the story of animosity between the two has been fostered for business reasons by the Shuberts themselves. The exponents of this theory contend that when Lee wants to get out of a deal, he says that J. J. will not allow him to go through with it, and that when J. J. wants to get out of a deal, he blames Lee. Actually there is no overt hostility between the brothers. Mr. J. J. says that it was the intention of the Messrs., when they collaborated in the construction of the Sardi Building in 1926, to move all their executive offices there from the somewhat constricted quarters on the upper floors of the Shubert Theatre. That summer, Mr. J. J., who sometimes explains a predilection for foreign musical shows by saying, "I am more dynamic and Continental than Mr. Lee," made his annual trip to Europe to inspect the new vintage of operettas. When he returned, he found that his office furniture had been moved into the new building, but that Mr. Lee had treacherously remained in the Shubert Theatre. The Shubert enterprises have been a two-headed organism ever since, with Mr. Lee's casting department and executive staff on the north side of Forty-fourth Street and Mr. J. J.'s on the south side. The separate-office arrangement resembles one of those dual households advocated by married female novelists. The Shuberts retain community of interests, but avoid friction; each produces shows without interference from the other. Failure of one of Mr. J. J.'s shows is made easier for Mr. Lee to bear by the knowledge that it was Mr. J. J.'s idea. Success is sweetened for Mr. Lee by the reflection that he will share in the profits. Things work out the same way on the other side of the street.

Shubert employees—house and company managers, play-readers, and publicity men—have the sympathy of their professional colleagues, because they must remain virtually on call until Mr. Lee decides to go home. The Shubert play-reading department gets about fifty manuscripts a month throughout the year and filters the best ones through to Mr. Lee's office. Authors of these promising works are sometimes summoned at a grisly hour shortly before dawn to read their scripts aloud. Mr. Lee never reads a play himself; he merely looks at synopses drawn up by his readers. During an author's reading, Mr. Lee sometimes appears to fall asleep. This is a frightful experience for the playwright, who is afraid to offend the producer by awakening him and, in desperation, continues reading. Mr. Lee always maintains that he has heard every word. The concentration of the Shuberts on their business is looked upon by most theatrical people as unsporting. If the brothers were going to work so hard, these critics think, they should have taken up a trade instead of the theatre. Mr. Lee's incessant activity, even though some of it is undoubtedly superfluous, has served him well during his forty years on Broadway. He has simply outworn most of his opponents.

The Messrs. have entirely different styles of behavior at rehearsals. Mr. Lee is undemonstrative but insistent. Upon seeing a rehearsal of a play, he often commands the author to make the second act the first, the first act the last, and put the third act in the middle. This sometimes improves a play immeasurably. In theatrical matters, Mr. Lee has a tender heart. The late Sam Shipman once wrote a play about a boy brought up by his mother, whom the boy supposed to be a widow. In reality the mother was a divorcée. The brutal father returned and won the boy's sympathy. The boy deserted the mother at the end of the second act, before discovering what sort of cad the father had been. In the third act, of course, son came back to mother. Mr. Lee wouldn't stand for the boy's being away from the mother during the intermission. He made Shipman arrange to have the reunion before the second act ended. "What will I do for a third act?" Shipman asked him. "That's your business," Mr. Lee said. "I have a lot of other things to think of."

Mr. Lee often acts out bits in backstage corners for the benefit of his directors. “Look,” he once told one of them, “anybody can play Cyrano. See?” He turned a chair around and straddled it, arms folded on the back, legs thrust out stiffly, as if in jackboots. Then he leaped lightly to his feet, flung an imaginary cape over his left shoulder, took two or three long strides, and jumped to *en garde*, an imaginary rapier in his right hand. “Da dill de-da,” he said, thrusting briskly at an imaginary opponent. “Deedle dee dum! That’s the way Mansfield used to do it. An actor like Everett Marshall can’t miss!” When Mr. Lee feels that something is lacking in a musical show, he often says, “What we need here is a song that goes like this: ‘Da, dum, de-dum-dum—da-da, dada, de-dum, de-dum-dum.’ ” The tune always turns out to be “Sing Something Simple,” but he never says so. Mr. Lee admires good actors, although he has spent the better part of his life trying to conceal that fact, because he does not want to pay them more than is necessary. Once, discussing actors, he said, “They are not an everyday-going class of people. They are very conceited, but the intelligence is still above the conceit.” His respect for actors is tied up with his inability to picture himself as one. “Myself,” he says, “I can’t make an after-dinner talk even to half a dozen people. I must have some kind of complex.”



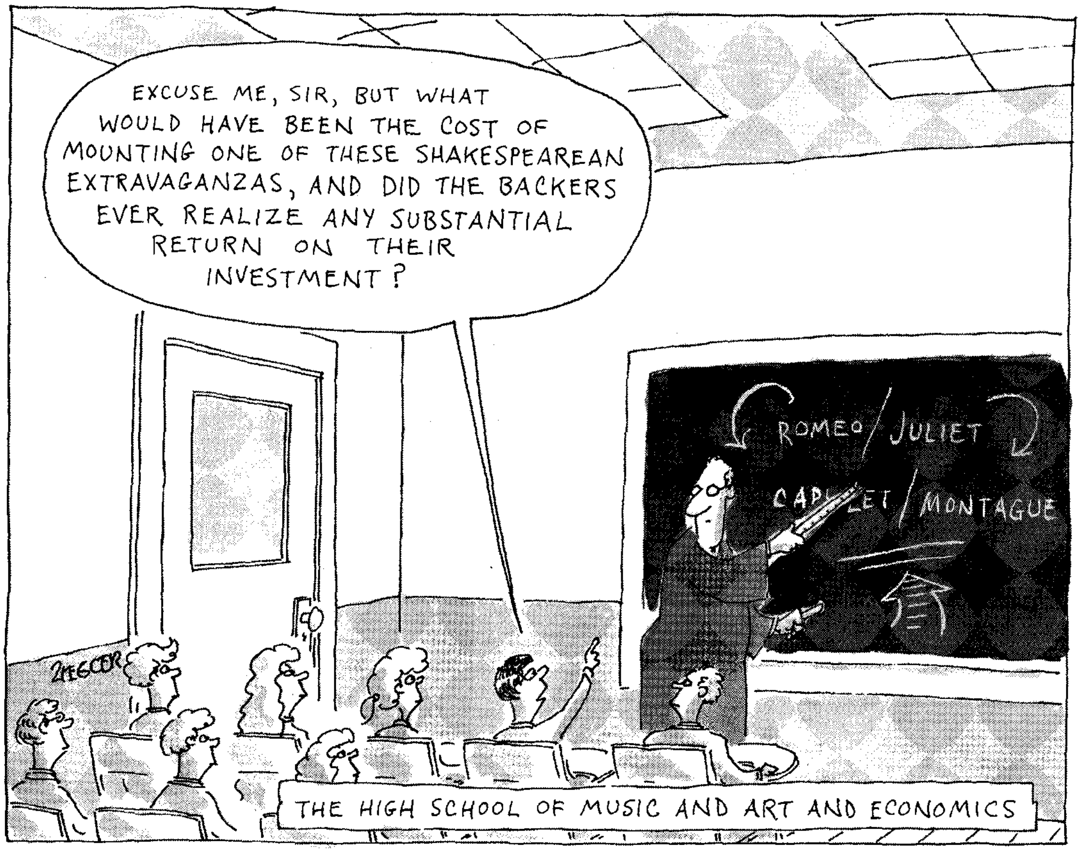
WILL COTTON

Mr. J. J. screams at the chorus people in the shows he produces; to principals he is often polite. He has always admired tall women and his shows are the last stronghold of the statuesque type of showgirl. No matter how engrossed he may become in the difficulties of putting on a show, he never forgets that he is first of all the owner of the theatre. At the dress rehearsal just before the opening of “You Never Know” at the Winter Garden last season, he was violently excited over the jerkiness of the production. “Such a stupid people,” he repeated mournfully as he wandered, an incongruous little figure, among the ranks of showgirls, most of them six feet tall in their high heels. The chorus people were in costume; Mr. J. J., in his wrinkled gray suit, looked like a comedian about to liven up the scene. “Walk around some more!” he shouted. “Don’t I get any use out of these dresses?” All at once he stopped the rehearsal and pointed in horror to a seat in the third row on which a Shubert underling had left a wet overcoat. Then he scrambled down off the stage, grabbed the coat, and held it aloft for the assembled cast to see. “Ruining my beautiful theatre!” he howled. Shows come and go, their fate a matter of almost pure chance, but theatre seats are the foundation of the Shuberts’ fortune.

MR. LEE concedes grudgingly that newspaper men today are probably honest, but he cannot for the life of him see why a hundred-dollar-a-week employee of a publisher should be allowed to impair a Shubert investment of $50,000 in a show. This does not prevent him from exploiting to the full any favorable reviews that accrue in the course of a season. He feels newspaper reviewers are naturally perverse, and admiration is wrung from them only by the supreme artistry of a particularly great production.

The Shuberts’ feeling against the critics came to a head in 1915, when the brothers ordered the doormen of their theatres to bar Alexander Woollcott, the reviewer for the *Times*. Woollcott, then twenty-eight, had said about a farce called “Taking Chances,” “It is not vastly amusing.” To the Shuberts the remark was evidence of violent animosity. They ordered the *Times* to send another reviewer to their attractions. The *Times* replied by throwing out all Shubert ads and Woollcott, backed by his bosses, applied to the United States District Court for an injunction restraining the Shuberts. He said he was being prevented from earning his livelihood as a critic. It was a glorious day for William Klein, the Shubert lawyer, who filed a brief listing all Woollcott’s unfavorable criticisms of Shubert shows, with dissenting reviews by Woollcott’s colleagues. Woollcott filed an equally long brief with concurrent opinions by the colleagues. The court ruled, to the astonishment of everybody, that the critic’s fairness had nothing to do with the case; if the Shuberts wished to bar a man from their property, they had a right to do so. Admission to a place of amusement, the court found, is not a civic right but a license granted by the owner and revocable upon refund of the admission price. On the basis of this decision, the one sort of critic a theatre may not bar is a Negro, because when a Negro is refused admittance there is a presumption that he has been so treated on account of race or color and he can sue the management for damages. Woollcott was white. Always realistic, the Shuberts soon made friends with Woollcott and the *Times*, which they had found the best medium for theatrical advertising.

A dozen years later, the Messrs. Lee and J. J. barred Walter Winchell, then dramatic reviewer for the *Graphic*, for writing “flip reviews.” Presently Winchell began to write a Broadway column. Mr. Lee feels that Winchell’s promotion was the result of their row and often reminds him that he should feel grateful. Last year, Winchell, by his ecstatic plugging of “Hellz-a-Poppin,” a Shubert enterprise, counteracted the almost unanimous scolding which the other daily reviewers gave the show and had a good deal to do with turning it into the hit it is. Mr. Lee refused to be inordinately thank-


EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE COST OF MOUNTING ONE OF THESE SHAKESPEAREAN EXTRAVAGANZAS, AND DID THE BACKERS EVER REALIZE ANY SUBSTANTIAL RETURN ON THEIR INVESTMENT?
ROMEO / JULIET
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THE HIGH SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND ART AND ECONOMICS

ful. "Winchell has roasted some very good shows," he said.

THE Shubert relations with actors, as with reporters, have been subject to frequent emotional disturbance. "The actor is a person so naturally conceited as to become unconsciously ungrateful," Lee once pronounced officially. "In most cases what passes for art is unmitigated self-assurance. It is a difficult thing to explain briefly how much the actor owes to the manager." It is hard to reconcile this low estimate of the actors' art with what the Shuberts said for the record about Joe Smith and Charles Dale of the Avon Comedy Four, who tried to break a contract with them. Attorney Klein's brief stated, "Defendants are novel, unique, and extraordinary. At every appearance they are received with long, loud, and practically continuous applause." The court ruled that Smith and Dale were irreplaceable. The Shuberts won a case on similar grounds against Gallagher and Shean. The comedians argued forlornly that they were terrible and that the Shuberts could hire any sort of turn to take their place. For a while after that, Shubert actors' contracts used to carry the clause, "I now admit that I am unique and extraordinary." Mr. Klein says proudly that these cases, like the one against Woollcott, created legal precedent. He thinks that the Shuberts have had a considerable part in the development of American jurisprudence. Mr. Klein has been the Shubert lawyer for thirty-five years and he says, in endorsement of his clients, "Nobody can show me a single case in which the Shuberts have failed to pay a judgment against them."

THE brothers have great confidence in each other's integrity; one never questions the other's drafts on the joint Shubert cash account. On the other hand, they are seldom in agreement about business policies and twice a year they meet in Mr. J. J.'s apartment atop the Sardi Building for a formal dinner and argument. They are attended by attorneys on these occasions. During the rest of the year they lead separate social existences. Mr. J. J. lives in his apartment alone except for a cook and a maid, and he seldom goes out at night. The living room, which runs the whole width of the building, is adorned with lighting fixtures from the old Hotel Knickerbocker and with a great deal of Louis XIV furniture. All of the furniture, he likes to assure visitors, was bought especially for the apartment—none of the pieces are leftovers from shows. At the west end of the room there is a wrought-iron door from a Venetian palace, on which the most noticeable adornment is a female figure with six breasts. The door weighs three and a half tons. The space behind one of the dining-room walls is hollow and filled with a large supply of liquor which Mr. J. J. acquired at reduced prices during prohibition and which he has as yet barely sampled. He isn't much of a drinker, but he never could resist a bargain. The dining room has Syrian furniture inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory, and on a terrace in front of the living room there is a fountain from the Knickerbocker lobby. Despite these and other attractions of his apartment, Mr. J. J., when he's at home in the winter, spends most of his time in the bathroom, reading in an armchair which he has installed there. This is because the bathroom is the only comfortably warm room in the place. The heat in the Sardi Building, above the first floor, is turned off at seven o'clock in the evening and all day on Sunday. Since it is impossible to warm the apartment on the top floor without heating the whole building, Mr. J. J. retires to the bathroom, which he has fitted up with an elaborate battery of electric heaters. He does all his play-reading there. When he occasionally goes out, it is usually to Lindy's for a cup of coffee at about midnight. He also likes to sit through double features at fourth-run movie houses. Mr. J. J. prefers to lunch in his apartment, but when he has to talk business with someone at noon, he eats with the person at Sardi's, on the first floor of his residence. Vincent Sardi, the proprietor, used to be a captain of waiters at the Little Club, a night place that the Shuberts owned many years ago. He is a good tenant now, and the

Shuberts always believe in patronizing people who do business with them.

Mr. Lee almost invariably lunches at Sardi's. Actors who want him to notice them eat there, too. Lee often convinces people who work for him that they also should live in the Century Apartments, where he lives and in which the brothers have an interest. Both the Messrs. Shubert like to say that they "never learned to play—never had time," but Mr. Lee at least gets about a good deal. He says he does so to maintain contacts. "Maybe I would like to play," he says plaintively, "but there is no one around I care to play with."

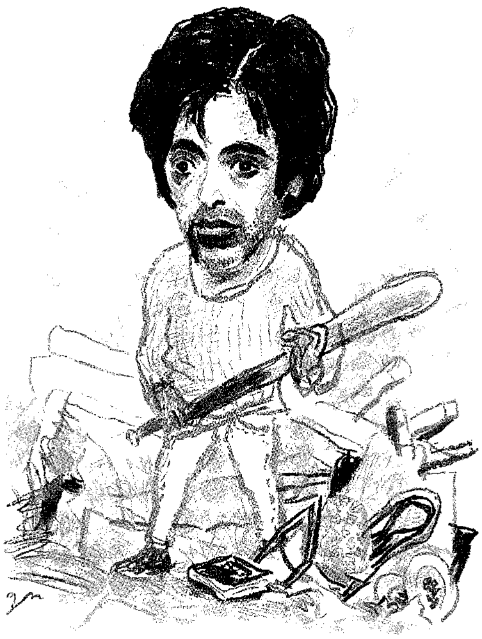
Mr. Lee's office in the Shubert Theatre building is in a turret and therefore circular—not more than twelve feet in diameter. Into it is squeezed the desk he has used ever since he came to New York, a chair, a sofa, a gilt statue of a nymph and faun, and an autographed photograph of Colonel Lindbergh. A short passageway leads from Mr. Lee's office to that of his secretary, Jack Morris, which in turn opens into the waiting room, a bleak place with French-gray furniture grouped around a snake plant, and two unchanging, disregarded signs—"No Smoking" and "No Casting until August." The gray chairs usually are occupied by a queue of petitioners waiting to see Mr. Lee. It is a point of pride with him that he never refuses to see anybody who is willing to wait a few hours. The passageway between Mr. Lee's office and his secretary's has an extra door leading directly to the waiting room, but only the experienced understand this door's significance. When Mr. Lee is ready to grant an audience, he pops out at the Morris end of the passageway and beckons to the man who has advanced to the head of the queue. This hopeful comes forward, thinking that Mr. Lee is going to conduct him into his private office. Mr. Lee takes him by the arm, leads him into the passageway, says "I'm sorry, I can't do anything now," and steers him through the extra door and into the waiting room again. This maneuver is known in the trade as the Shubert brush-off.

BECAUSE of their fear of assuming responsibility, Shubert employees in general are the most literal-minded attachés of the American theatre. Their attitude has given rise to some famous

GERARD NICOLAS

INTERLUDE 1983
"AMERICAN BUFFALO"

WE are lucky indeed to be in the presence, at the Booth, of a classic production of what strikes me today as a classic American comedy—David Mamet's "American Buffalo." When I saw it for the first time on Broadway, some six years ago, I was plainly unready for it and so mistook its nature. Perhaps in part because of Ulu Grosbard's direction—one is always reluctant to have formed an ill judgment unaided—the play seemed to me then to reflect a dourly despairing image of brutish lower-class American life; I perceived it as a series of glimpses into a sub-Studs Terkel Chicago, where a junk shop (symptomatically situated belowground, on a dark side street constantly patrolled by the police) served as the cave in which three slow-witted men proposed and failed to carry out a sorry little scam of no importance whatever. I felt that Mr. Mamet was meting out a harsh and premature sentence of death upon those promises which even in the soiled depths of our so-called Second City a homely individual entrepreneur might hope to realize, whether legitimately or illegitimately. Well! The content of Mr. Mamet's play hasn't changed, but my opinion of it certainly has, with the help of the present director, Arvin Brown, who first staged this production at the Long Wharf, in New Haven, and who provides a reading of it very different from that of the 1977 version. Take, for example, the uncanny metamorphosis of the language of the play, which earlier resembled, to my ear, a tiresomely monosyllabic drumbeat of obscenities and now sounds, with not a word changed, a lyrical note as refreshing as that of the reiterated "Goddamm"s of Pound's witty, parodic "Ancient Music." The play celebrates the fate of valorous failures, or not-quite-failures, who, though they will never prevail, will take good care to survive. They are figures readily at home in our literary tradition, among scamps tangling for the anonymous Yankee Doodle, through the confidence men of Melville, Twain, and Frost, and on to those of Malamud, Bellow, and Roth. They are every hypocritical Wall Street rags-to-riches story turned inside out and upside down; not for the world would we be one of them, but not for the world dare we exclude them from the gross national product of American energy, optimism, and cunning.



The three members of the cast—J. J. Johnston, James Hayden, and Al Pacino—embody their characters with the welcome confidence in their gifts, and in the use to which their gifts are being put, that is as far beyond mere bravura acting as marble is beyond marzipan. In their ratty, gloomy den, where they now induced fear from many a handful of actual dust and now induced laughter from it, they held me spellbound. —BRENDAN GILL yarns of niggardliness. When the cast of "You Can't Take It with You" was rehearsing in the Booth Theatre, the supply of drinking cups at the house's water-cooler gave out and Sam Harris, producer of the play, called for more. He got them, with a bill for $1.15. A representative of the Shubert auditing department pointed out that the contract of rental did not specifically obligate the Shuberts to provide drinking cups. Harris wrote an indignant letter to Lee Shubert, who had gone to considerable effort to get "You Can't Take It with You," a prospective hit, into a Shubert house. He reprimanded his underling for sending the bill. "Before you do a thing like that," Mr. Lee said, "you should consult me!" Of a piece with this story is one about Noël Coward. He was playing in "Point Valaine" at the Barrymore Theatre, and asked to have the paint in his dressing room freshened up. He got a bill for $7 for the painting job, again apparently from an auditor drunk with power. Coward vowed never to play another Shubert theatre. Even among men who dislike Mr. Lee, few believe him guilty of these small, miserly touches. They are not in his style. "I paid Sarah Bernhardt eighteen hundred dollars a night," Lee says. "Do you think I need a couple of dollars?" When he is particularly vexed, he sometimes bursts into tears. "How could you do this to me?" he will ask the person who has displeased him. "I would rather have given you fifty thousand dollars."

Despite such demonstrations, well-trained Shubert subordinates continue at every opportunity to save money for their bosses. There is an interlude in "Hellz-a-Poppin," a show which promises to earn $1,000,000 for the Shuberts, in which all the lights go out while members of the cast pepper the audience with dried beans. Olsen and Johnson, the stars of the show, introduced this subtle bit of business long ago, when they were managing their own company in vaudeville. From the beginning, Olsen and Johnson bean-throwers had used large paper cups holding half a pint of beans. Shortly after the show opened here the comics were approached by the company manager. "If we used ordinary drinking cups to throw the beans out of," he said, "we could get the cups cheaper, because we buy them in such large quantities for the theatres. Also, with the smaller cups we would use less beans. Altogether, I figure, we would save at least a dollar a week." ◆

INTERLUDE WITH MAUREEN STAPLETON

I MADE my decision to act when I was five years old, when I saw my first Jean Harlow movie. I went to movies all the time. Jean Harlow was so beautiful, and everybody loved her. What the hell, what could be better? I didn't dare tell anybody about my decision. I happened to be fatter than any other kid on our block. I had a nice fat, unhappy teenhood. When I was twelve, I informed my mother for the first time that I was going to become an actress. She said, "Sure. Sure." She didn't know that I wasn't asking her, I was *telling* her. I wanted to become an actress because that was the way to be beautiful and rich and to have all the fellows love you. The desire was so strong that it sustained me.

ABE BIRNBAUM

In the fall of 1946, I called up Guthrie McClintic's office to find out who was going to play the part of the lead, Pegeen Mike, in "The Playboy of the Western World." By chance, McClintic answered the telephone himself. I asked my question politely, and he gave me a rude answer, saying it was none of my damn business. This set me off. Among other things, I told him that I didn't give a damn who was playing it. That did the trick. He turned polite. He asked me to come see him at three the next afternoon. I wound up with the part of one of the village girls and understudy to the lead. It was my first Broadway play. My grandmother, mother, brother, and three aunts came to the opening. For eight performances, in the last week of the play's run, I played the lead. At the beginning of my first performance, I was so terrified I couldn't look up, and when I stood up I had to hold on to a piece of furniture to keep my legs from buckling. It was my happiest terror.

I like to read a play not knowing what part I'm up for. When I do know, I can't focus on my own part at all. There's something that almost blinds me. The part is like a blank space. Fear sets in right away, and I then read the play over several times. In certain plays, when you start work you can make a strong emotional identification right away, or get some sort of over-all picture of the characterization. Then it's like a construction job. I often draw on other people or on experiences that illuminate some part of the character. Then I add things as I go along. I once worked with a woman who turned to me suddenly, in the middle of a rehearsal, and cried, "Now we're getting the pants on!" It *is* like getting dressed. After a while, as you go along, you find that all things dovetail. Once you set the things you do and make them mean certain things, you then respond to the stimuli you yourself have set up. Then you *feel.* You might set it up as a combination of mind and feeling, but the feeling usually takes over. Crying is easy. I watch "Lassie" on television and I cry. I watch an old man carrying an icebox up two flights of stairs and I cry. Bobby Lewis says, "If crying were acting, my Aunt Rifke would be Duse."

I believe in the toughness of actors. I have a feeling of genuine pride in actors as my people. You need a very strong stomach. You need strength, and no matter how strong you get, you always need to get stronger. There's never a guarantee you'll go on working. A show will always close, sooner or later. If I'm not working, I just consider myself somebody who is waiting to go on working. It's the only thing you can do. Your aspiration to act is so great, so deep, so complete, that you give yourself not ten years, not twenty, but your whole lifetime to realize it. —LILLIAN ROSS

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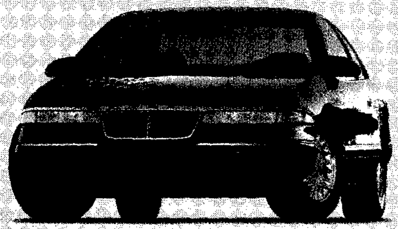

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BEHIND THE SCENES

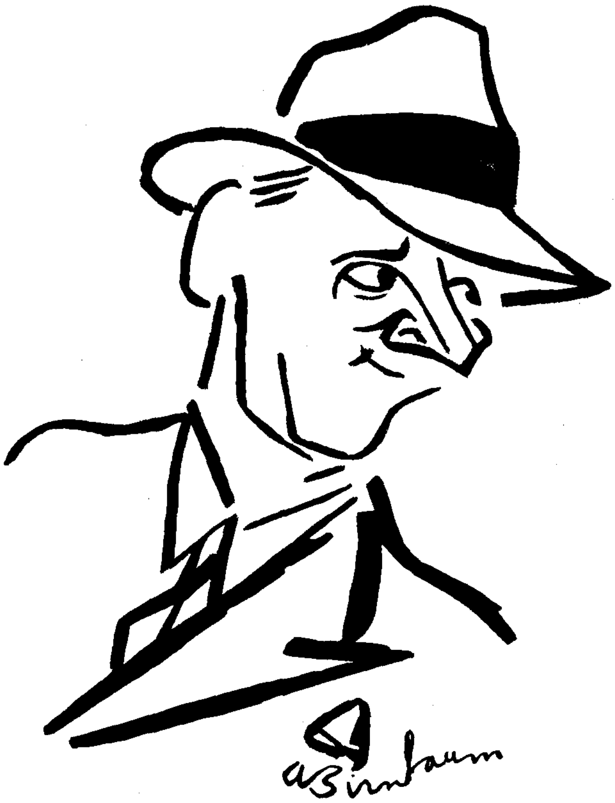
MR. FIRST-NIGHTER

Walter Winchell was the voice of Broadway. Here, in a 1940 Profile, St. Clair McKelway casts a cold eye on the man who for more than three decades dispensed brickbats and bravos from his column in the Daily Mirror.

SUCCESS and public acclaim have not made Walter Winchell a stuffed shirt. He has a gift for idiosyncrasy and is not self-conscious about it. He has two children and both are named after him; his son is Walter and his daughter is Walda. He goes to sleep around nine or ten in the morning and gets up in time to have breakfast while his children are having their supper. In the inside pocket of his coat he carries a loose-leaf booklet containing as many as twenty photographs of Walter and Walda, and in another pocket of his coat he carries a loaded automatic. In his overcoat pocket he carries a second loaded automatic. Although he has never been shot at and has been beaten up only twice, he is always expecting to be attacked.

The *Mirror* pays him $1,200 a week and fifty per cent from the syndication of his column, amounting to some $750 a week, and he makes $5,000 a week more for his weekly radio talk. As Winchell has pointed out in his column, he pays around fifty per cent of his earnings to the state and federal governments. This leaves him a net income of approximately $185,000 a year, but he wears shoes until they have holes in the soles. He almost invariably wears a blue suit, a blue shirt, a blue tie, and a snap-brim gray felt hat. He has never played golf or tennis or badminton or Ping-Pong. He learned to swim only last summer. Until 1932, he had never seen a football game. He took up the rumba a few months ago and is now an enthusiast. Practically the only other form of relaxation his friends have actually seen him engage in is motoring. The New York Police Department has given him special permission to equip his sedan with a short-wave receiving set with which he picks up calls sent from Police Headquarters to police radio patrol cars.

This device forms the center of Winchell's recreational activities. For hours, late at night, he cruises the streets of Manhattan accompanied by three or four friends and sometimes some celebrity like Brenda Frazier or John Gunther. The radio picks up police messages and Winchell drives hurriedly to the scene of the action. The action almost invariably consists of policemen looking for a burglar. Once in a great while the car reaches the scene of a holdup or a murder in time for Winchell to get what he calls "a thrill."


ABE BIRNBAUM

This almost nightly routine is trying to Winchell's friends, and the personnel in the sedan is constantly in process of replenishment. The celebrities seldom go more than once. Myrna Loy dropped off to sleep the time she went. It is possible to sleep in Winchell's sedan, for although the Police Department has given him permission to equip it with a siren, he is conscious of the disturbance the siren creates in the early hours of the morning and uses it only when he is going on what looks like a particularly exciting call. One night he was speeding up Central Park West on such a call with the siren on. As he approached the apartment house in which he lives, he shut it off. "I don't want to wake up Walter and Walda," he explained to his friends. He did not turn the siren on again until the car reached 110th Street.

A GREAT many people, meeting Winchell for the first time in some restaurant or night club, have exclaimed afterward, "Say, he isn't such a bad guy!" This is understandable. Winchell has a peculiarly bewitching personality. He has a lean face, full of alertness, with an expression of questing intelligence like a fox terrier's. His eyes are blue and hard. He is consistently lively and restless; it is impossible to imagine him in repose. He has an enormous nervous energy, and the experience of watching him burn it up extravagantly is stimulating and sometimes touching. One of his phrase-making friends calls him "a thrilling bore." When he is not talking, he sits forward with his head raised unnaturally in an attitude of intense awareness. His heel is apt to beat quick time on the floor like a swing musician's, his gaze roves ceaselessly over the room, and his hands go on little fruitless expeditions over the tablecloth, up and down the lapels of his coat, in and out of his pockets. In a gathering of ten or twelve at a place like Lindy's or the Stork Club, he appears to listen to the general conversation with only half an ear, but that is enough. If something is mentioned that will make an item for his column, he will say, "I can use that," and will take out a pencil and notebook and write it down. Having responsibilities which far exceed those of the ordinary journalist, he usually carries a notebook instead of a sheaf of copy paper. He is left-handed, and this makes him look especially intense and pains-

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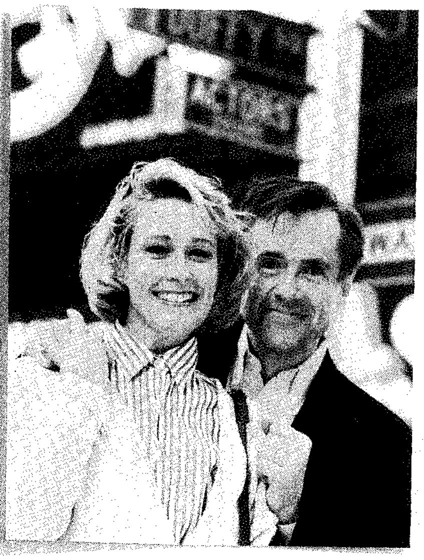

This was the perfect trip. A Broadway extravaganza! We saw 3 shows and ate to our hearts' content. First, we had the best Thai food, then saw "Crazy For You". Gershwin's music and the dancing were amazing! After the show we had some cheesecake and walked back to the hotel. The next morning we slept in and then did miles of walking and shopping - from 5th Ave. to Shubert Alley (great souvenirs) to Central Park. Then we had a great steak dinner on Restaurant Row and saw "Guys and Dolls". The sets, the costumes, the music! I'm still singing the songs. The next morning while we were having bagels and cream cheese, we thought, we could use a little "Jelly's Last Jam". (So we called the box office and got great seats.) Another major hit!

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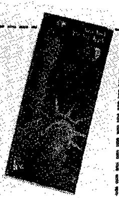

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"You mean Tommy Tune's not in 'Tommy' at all?"

• •

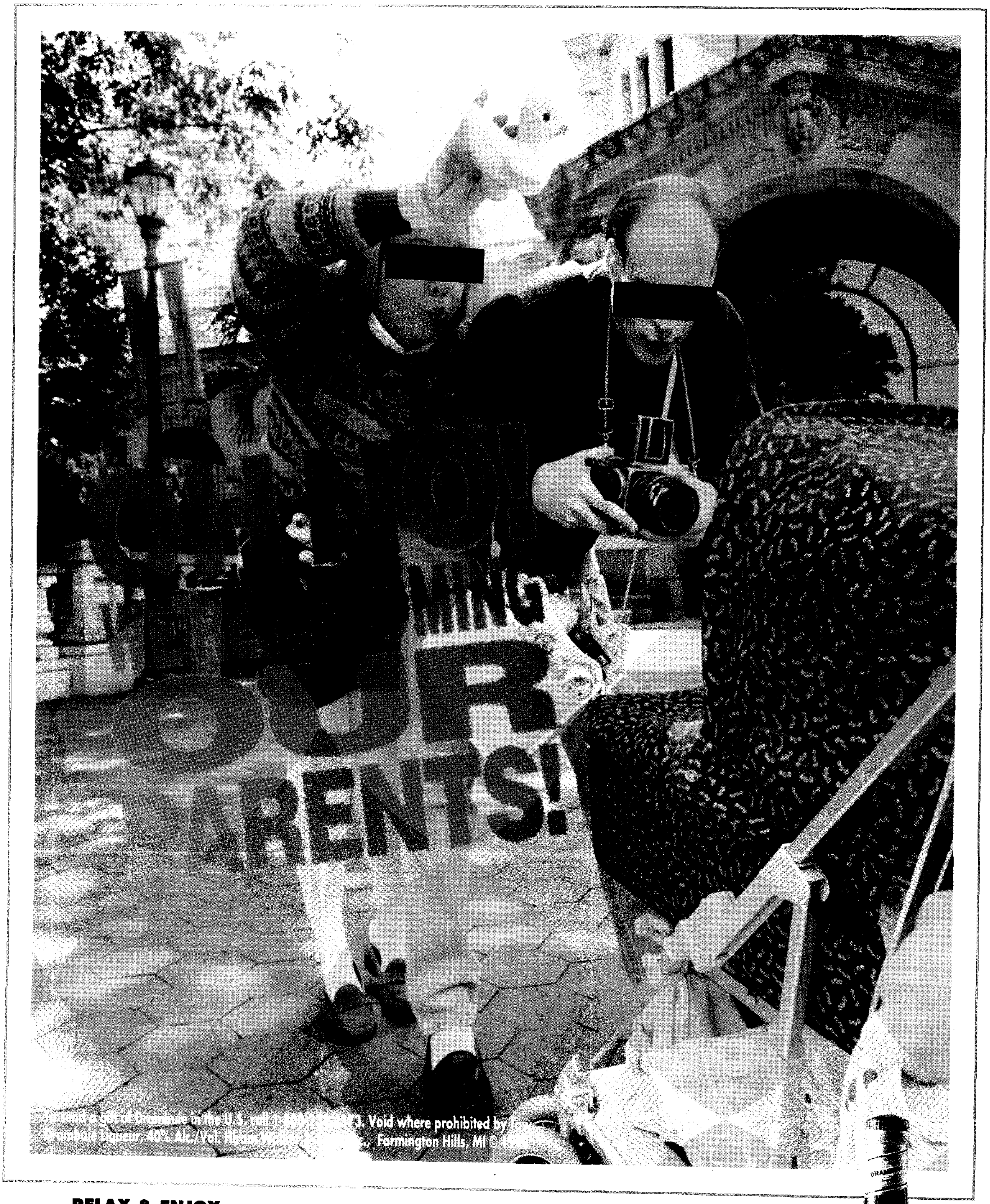
taking when he is writing something down. At all times he gives the impression of being hungry, of being incessantly in want. In a man of such vitality this is an appealing quality. It is possible for a person to have an entirely unselfish impulse to give Winchell something.

Winchell has a certain integrity, as well as a number of codes all his own. He is as magnificently eccentric in thought as he is in action. He is ashamed of nothing he does. He uses his column at times as an instrument of personal revenge, but he does this as straightforwardly as a cave man would swing a club. "I let him have it three days later," he will say evenly, in recalling what he wrote about some person who had slighted or insulted him. He is naturally aggressive and is always on the offensive. There is nothing apologetic or cringing in his nature. He has a childlike pride in his success and he makes no bones about it. He is fully conscious of the damage a casual item in his column can do to persons he has no wish to hurt. He seems to be mellowing. Lately he has been known to writhe in honest agony when the painful consequences of one of his own items are pointed out to him. To a small degree he literally suffers with those he wounds. His attitude on this curious state of affairs seems to be based on the belief that the appearance of such items in his column is as inexorable as fate. "What could I do?" he will say passionately. "It was a good item, wasn't it?" Thus he continues to print gossip about the marital relations of people who have not applied for divorce, he does not hesitate to hint at homosexual tendencies in local male residents, and he reports from time to time attempted suicides which otherwise would not be made public. He believes that if a thing is true, or even half true, it is material for his column, no matter how private or personal it may be. He makes one exception to this rule. He claims that he never knowingly reports on extramarital relationships if he knows the marriage is a happy one. This is pointed to with pride by Winchell's greatest admirers as being generous and downright decent.

Taking a Winchell item which looks accurate, and then going to the source to find out whether it is or not, is more illuminating, and more fun, than simply picking out items which everybody knows to be wrong. In order to estimate how often Winchell is right, how often he is partially wrong, and how often he is wholly wrong, all five of Winchell's Monday columns for the month of April were clipped out of the *Mirror* and dissected. In these five columns were 239 separate items. Of these, it was discovered that 108 were unverifiable because they were what gossip writers call "blind" items, in which no names are mentioned, or were expressions of opinion, or were items which the person concerned refused to confirm or deny. Thus, 131 items of the 239 were verifiable. Of these, fifty-three were completely accurate, twenty-four were partially inaccurate, and fifty-four were completely inaccurate. The percentages are as follows: 41.2 per cent completely inaccurate, 18.3 per cent partially inaccurate, 40.5 per cent completely accurate. In other words, Winchell was not quite half right in the month of April.

Walter Winchell has been openly condemned only rarely, usually rather fumblingly, and sometimes with disheartening consequences. He has been struck only twice, once by two men who, he says, were beaten up later by New York police detectives, and once by Al Jolson, who knocked him down in Hollywood a few years ago. Jolson has been held up as a hero because of this by some of his friends, but he himself apologized publicly afterward. Another bold but ineffective critic of Winchell was the theatrical man Earl Carroll. His criticism was oral and amounted to a denunciation. At a gathering at the Central Park Casino in January, 1932, the fastidious producer of the "Vanities" got to his feet and said, in full, "Walter, I wonder if you can take it? We've been taking it from you for a long time. I want to tell you that you are not fit to associate with decent people. You don't belong!" The occasion was a party given by A. C. Blumenthal and his wife, Peggy Fears. There was an uncomfortable silence. Winchell did not reply. Carroll bowed himself out. Winchell said magnanimously later, "Carroll certainly was entitled to his scolding of me. I had treated him pretty mean for many years." Afterward they made up. The incident attracted no public attention.

Westbrook Pegler recently criticized Winchell's familiarity with the adminis-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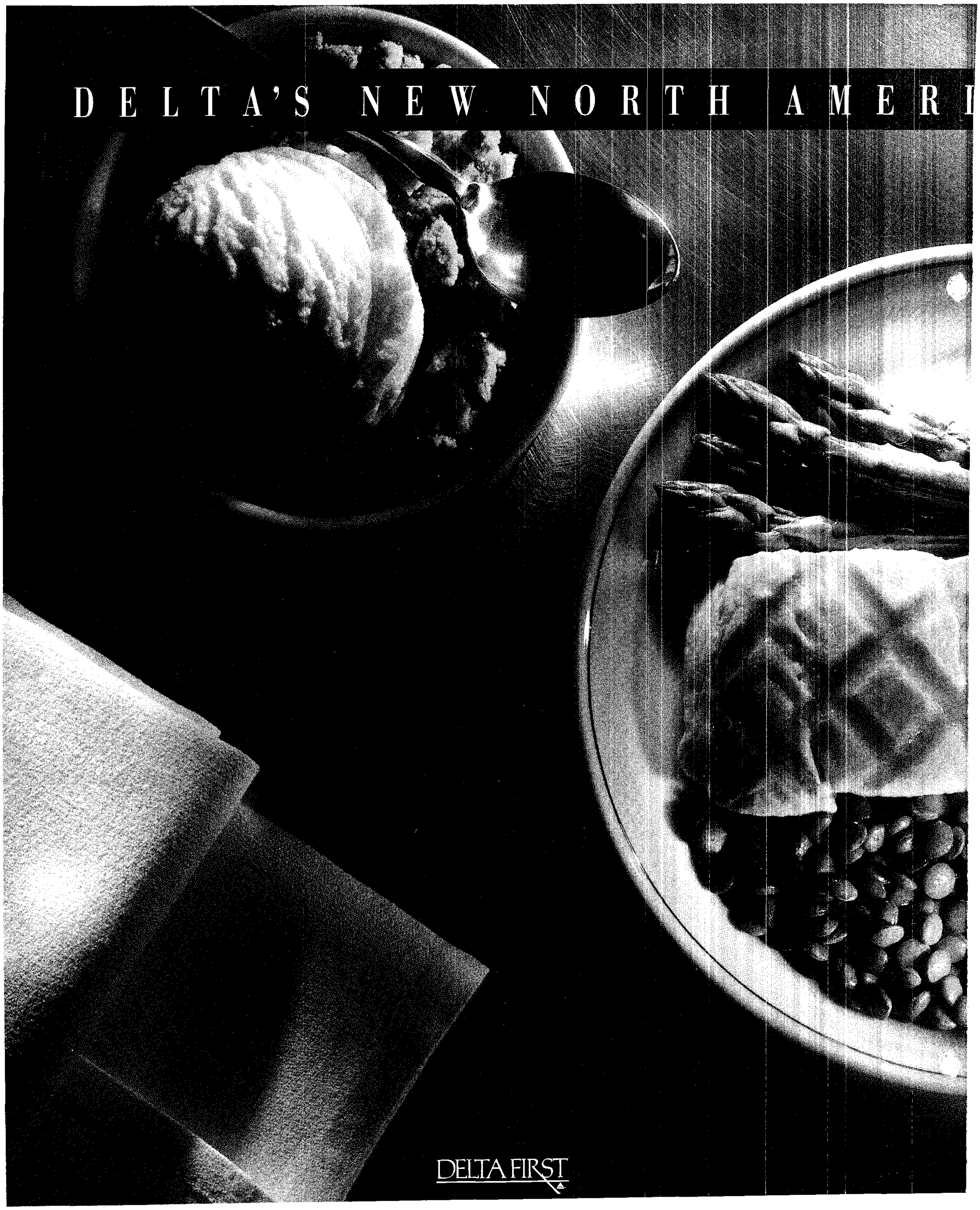
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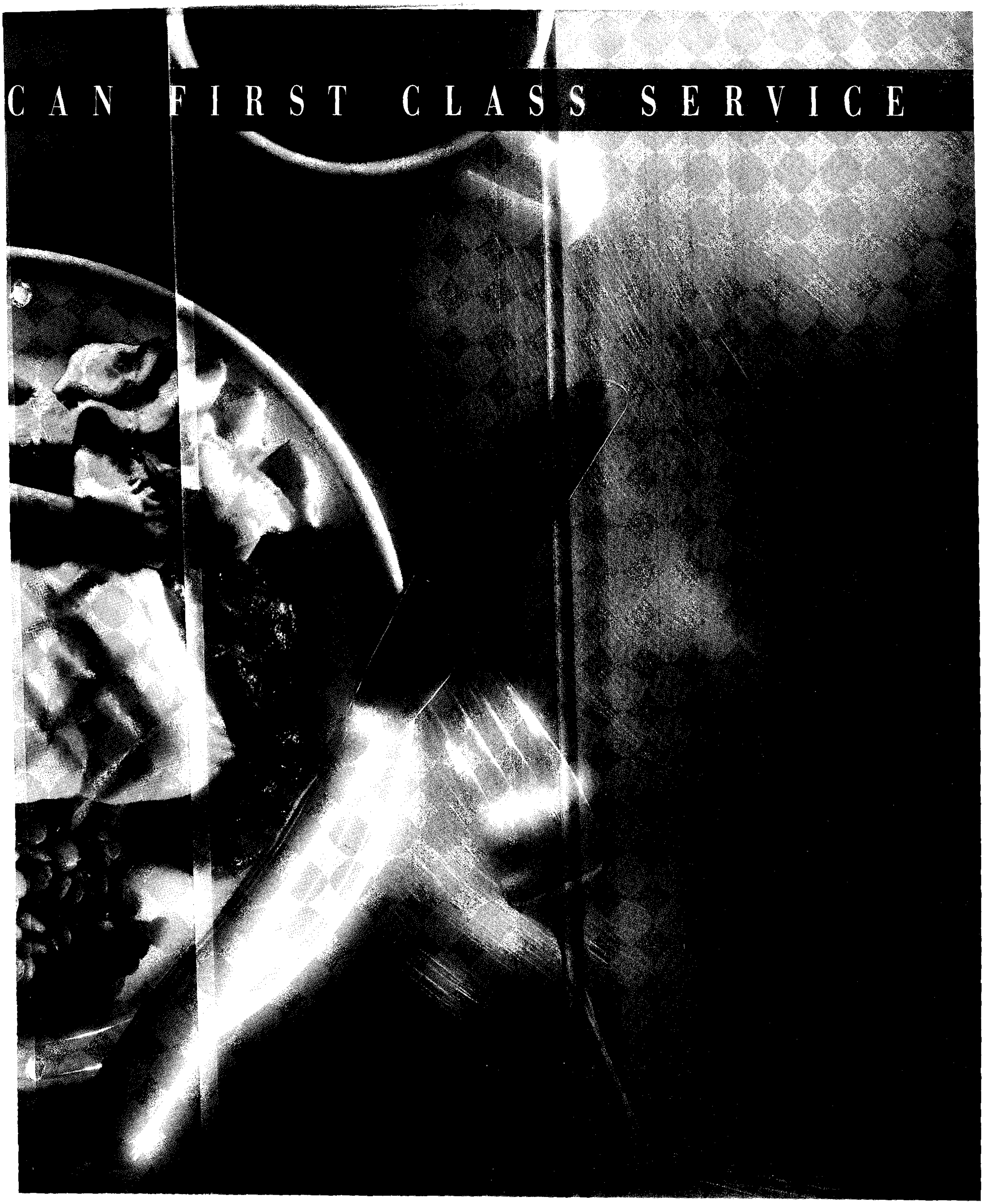

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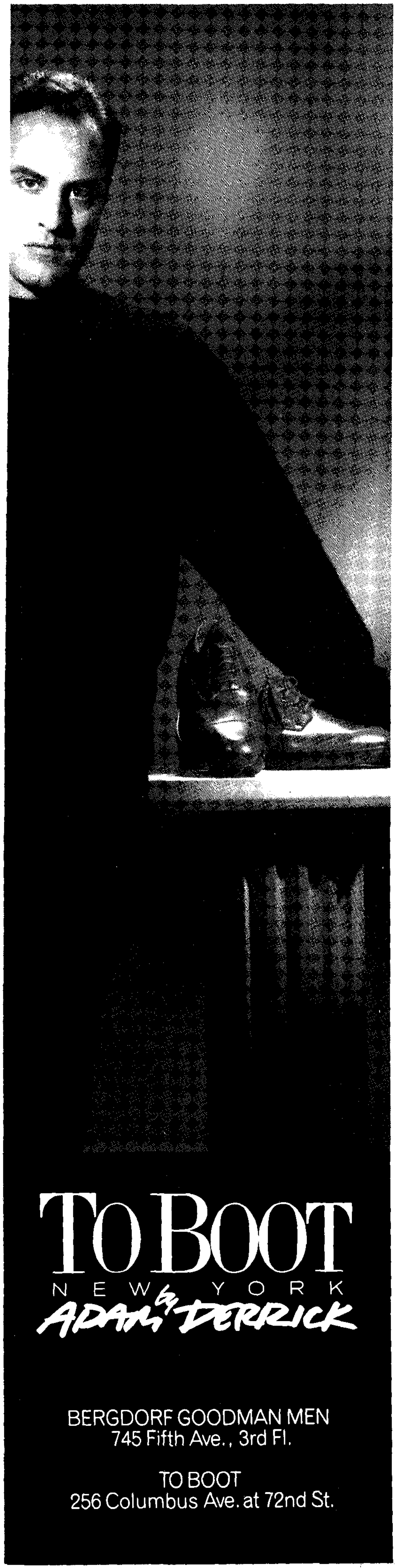

tration of the F.B.I. and referred to Winchell, without naming him, as "a gent's-room journalist." Winchell retorted with a full column in which he attacked Pegler, also without naming him.

A few other thoughtful attempts have been made by Winchell's fellow-journalists to define the man's personality and his journalistic code as it is reflected in his column. Alexander Woollcott wrote in Hearst's *Cosmopolitan* in 1933 of "that celebrated, most debatable, most enterprising and most intrusive journalist of our time," but Mr. Woollcott bogged down after he went into Winchell a little way. "I suppose," he wrote, "it would be easy to assemble evidence in support of the contention that Winchell is lacking in taste. He has a more valuable asset. For want of a better term let us call it zest."

WINCHELL writes his column and prepares the script for his Sunday-night radio broadcast at home. He employs two secretaries, who work in an office at the *Mirror*, which he rarely visits. He keeps in touch with his secretaries mostly by telephone. His column goes to press around six in the evening, soon after he wakes up, and at that time he may make last-minute changes by telephone. Then he starts on the column which will go to press the next evening. His mail, which is stupendous in size and variety of subject matter, is sent to him by a messenger around 6 P.M., and he gets a great part of his material from that. He spends several hours going through it and selecting items which he will use in the column he is preparing. He is practically incommunicado during this period and his secretaries call him only on extremely urgent business. He scribbles replies on letters he wishes to answer, then they are sent back to the *Mirror* office and the secretaries work on them the next day. He does not pay for items.

Winchell does not often go to night clubs anymore except for the Stork Club. The Stork Club serves as an outside office. He arrives there almost every night around eleven o'clock, having prepared the major part of his column from his mail. He is usually at the Stork Club until four or five in the morning. After that he drives around in his car for a while and then goes home, finishes his column, sends it to the *Mirror* office, and goes to sleep around 9 or 10 A.M. While he is asleep, the column is set up in type and proofs are sent to King Features Syndicate, the Hearst syndicate organization, where it is edited for out-of-town papers. Most of the changes are made in possibly libellous items. Winchell accepts this editing without protest. A lawyer employed by the *Mirror* also reads a proof and makes changes or deletions which he thinks may prevent libel suits.

At the Stork Club, Winchell takes telephone calls from persons he wishes to speak to and receives personally some of the many people who are always wanting to see him, ranging from celebrities and politicians to chorus girls with a complaint about labor conditions. Sometimes he sees them in the Stork Club barbershop and sometimes at a table just inside the entrance. While he is there, the barbershop may be reached only by persons whom Winchell wishes to see. It is in a loft building next door and has two entrances—through the front of the loft building and through a passage from the club. In the club he orders captains of waiters about in a proprietary manner, and although there has been a rumor for years that he has a financial interest in the place, he says he hasn't. His friend Sherman Billingsley, proprietor of the Stork Club, says the same thing, adding that Winchell's frequent mentions of the place in his column have had much to do with its success and that he is grateful to Winchell and friendly with him. "That rat!" Mr. Billingsley exclaimed to some table companions recently when Winchell, in spite of their friendship and the fact that Billingsley is still married, linked his name with that of a musical-comedy star. But he managed to conquer his irritation before he saw Winchell later that evening.

When sitting at his table, surrounded by three or four friends, with perhaps one bodyguard in the offing, Winchell may listen to a reformer from Atlantic City who believes his efforts to clean up the resort will be successful only if he has Winchell's support, or to a hysterical admirer who tiptoes up and says, as if making a speech, "I want to shake your hand, Walter. I think you are a great man and America's most valuable citizen." Winchell shakes the hand. Such tributes are frequent. People sit at the

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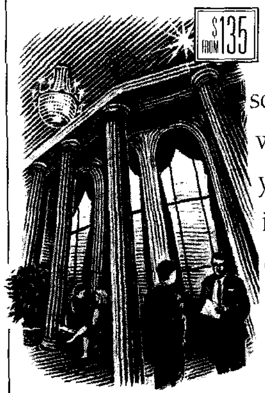

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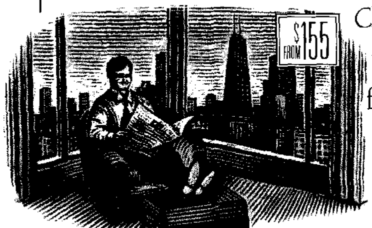

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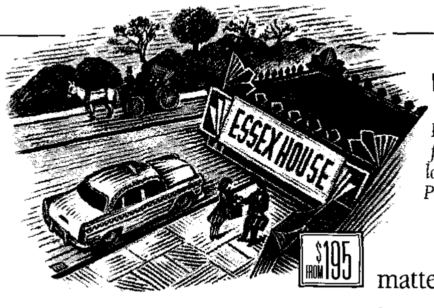

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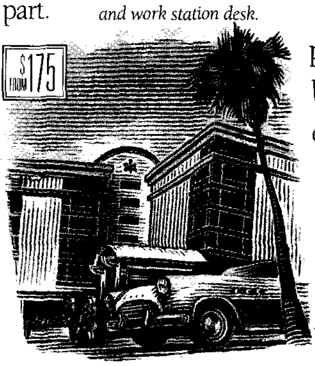

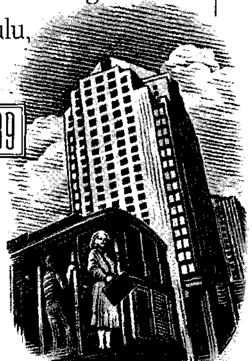

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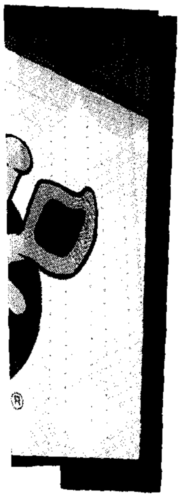

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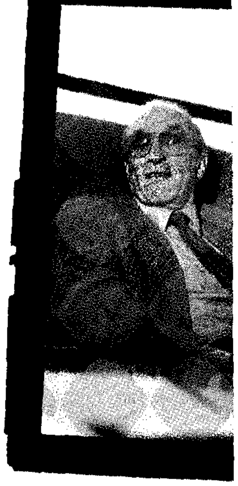

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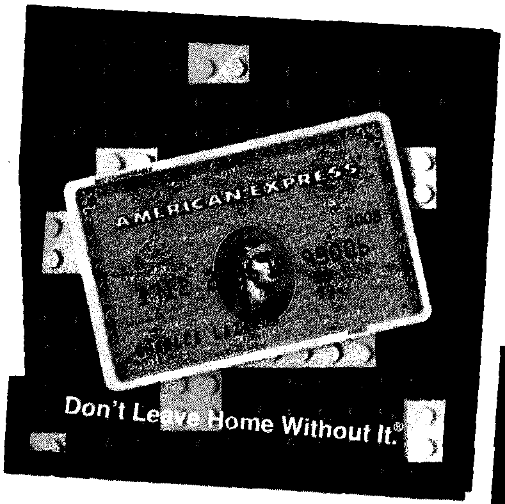

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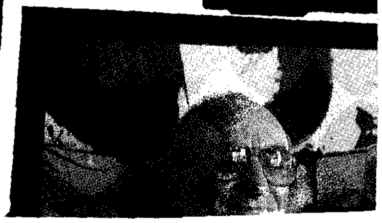

Stork Club bar for hours waiting for Winchell to come in so that they may have the opportunity to compliment him. Many of them are sincere, and have no axes to grind. Occasionally the pleasure Winchell receives from the outbursts of enthusiasm is dulled by the afterthought which the admirer expresses as he bows himself away, such as "I'm a tenor. So-and-So's the name," or "I'm at Loew's State this week. Song and dance. So-and-So's the name." Winchell deplores sycophancy of this sort and never rewards such a person with a mention in his column, even a scandalous one. Then there are the bold ones at the Stork Club, such as the débutante who one night slipped over and grabbed Winchell's bread when he was eating his supper. "A bet," she said demurely, and skipped off. Late at night, a literary relationship between Winchell and Leonard Lyons, gossip man for the *Post*, is apt to be revealed. It is comparable to Conrad's paternal friendship for Stephen Crane. Lyons, who is Winchell's protégé, not a rival, the *Post* being an afternoon paper and his "Lyons Den" gossip column being also syndicated by Hearst, appears unobtrusively from somewhere and says, "Walter, may I check a gag?" "O.K.," says the veteran. Lyons then recites an anecdote which he intends to pass on to his readers the next day. If it is old or sour, in Winchell's opinion, he advises Lyons to throw it out. If not, he says "O.K." a second time and Lyons goes happily back to his job of hopping from table to table, looking for gossip and gags.

WINCHELL has been described in the New York press as "Broadway's Greatest Scribe," "Boyfriend of Broadway," "Little Boy Peep," and "The Bard of Broadway." He prefers the last. His friends sometimes refer to him as The Brain and The King. He is unable to decide which of these is his favorite. He is like a king in many ways but not in others. Edmund Burke once asserted that "kings are naturally lovers of low company." His general argument was that the status of a king is so much higher than that of the next greatest dignitary that the difference between the highest and the lowest non-kings is slight, from a king's point of view. A king, according to Burke, is irritated by the more consequential non-kings because they feel a responsibility for his behavior, frown at his vices, and try to make him go straight. He therefore consorts with lowly folk who flatter and amuse him. Although Winchell is sought after by many prominent people, he usually shakes them off an hour or two after midnight and hobnobs with mediocre newspaper reporters and undistinguished theatrical folk. He feels more at ease with them. On the other hand, kings, throughout history, have made a habit of putting aside their public personalities and going around incognito. Presidents have shown a similar weakness. Both Wilson and Coolidge used to slip away from the Secret Service men and take walks by themselves revelling in their anonymity. If Winchell has ever had such impulses, he has suppressed them resolutely. He seems to have no desire to get away from himself. When he goes to Miami Beach in the winter he always stops at the Roney

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Plaza, where everybody knows him. For years he spent his summer vacations hanging around night clubs and restaurants in town. Two summers ago, his wife having persuaded him to buy a house in Westchester, he discovered and endorsed the country, but in his summer home he sleeps all day in an air-conditioned room kept dark by light-proof blinds and usually comes to town every night whether he has to do so professionally or not. Occasionally, driving around after midnight with friends, he plays a sort of reverse version of the incognito game, the object being to see how soon he will be recognized in a public place off the beaten track. Almost anywhere in town he is recognized by somebody within a few minutes. If he is not, it is his custom to say to a bartender or waiter, "I'm Walter Winchell." In no time the place is in a hubbub, and Winchell leaves.

Once, not long ago, Winchell and a friend stopped for some coffee at an unpretentious roadside restaurant in lower Westchester. Nobody was in the place but a slatternly girl working behind the counter. She did not recognize Winchell and looked at him sourly, as if he were just a man buying a cup of coffee. Halfway through his coffee, Winchell winked at his friend and then drew the girl into conversation.

"Do you read the *Mirror*?" he asked.

"Nah," she said. "I take the *News*."

"Ever listen to the radio?"

"Sometimes."

"Ever listen to Ben Bernie or Walter Winchell?"

"Nah," said the girl. "What I really like is Hawaiian music."

Winchell and his friend left the place without further talk. As they got into the car, Winchell said, "Can you imagine that dumb biddy?" Later, as they drove along, Winchell suddenly said "Huh!" The friend asked him what he meant by this. "I was just thinking about that dumb biddy," Winchell said. "Can you imagine it?"

IN 1922, Walter Winchell was a poverty-stricken ex-vaudevillian earning $25 a week writing uninspired notes and hustling advertisements for a theatrical trade paper on Broadway. In 1929, he was a Hearst gossip columnist, hired at a salary of $500 a week to start. There is inspirational material in such a progress,

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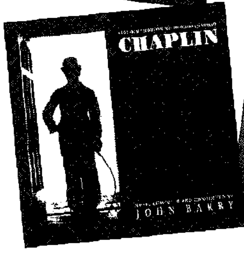

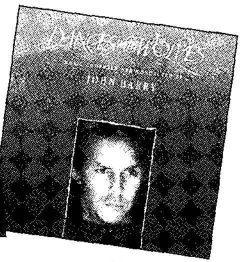

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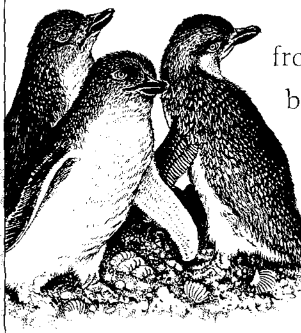


the traditional success story of the persistent poor boy. Since Winchell joined the Hearst organization, however, he has accomplished a number of feats more astounding than his rise from rags to riches. One of these is that, having been an intimate friend of Owney Madden, New York's No. 1 gang leader of the prohibition era, he became, in the short space of two years, the public pal of J. Edgar Hoover, the No. 1 G-man of the repeal era. Another is that, having openly expressed complete indifference toward national politics just before the election of 1932, and scorn for all the candidates, he became in a few months such a vociferous worshipper of Franklin D. Roosevelt that he got an appreciative letter soon afterward from the White House and has since been received there more than once. Thirdly, under the very eyes of his readers, and without causing them to blink or shudder, he has become a cosmopolitan thinker who can with a straight face cable advice to a British Prime Minister.

All this has not been a mere transformation of personality or a conventional climb from one rung of the ladder to the next. Winchell remained a friend of gangsters long after he became the unofficial press agent of the G-men. Furthermore, he continues to write scandalous gossip in the same columns in which he insists that America is, as he calls it, "okay."

Winchell became a great patriot without losing touch with the common man. On November 22, 1938, he wrote in his column as follows:

> On Thursday next, Thanksgiving Day, *every American* should look about him, and weigh what it means to be an American . . . We should all be thankful that in Civilization's Darkest Hour, our country is the land that stands for Freedom, Tolerance and the *Dignity of Man.*

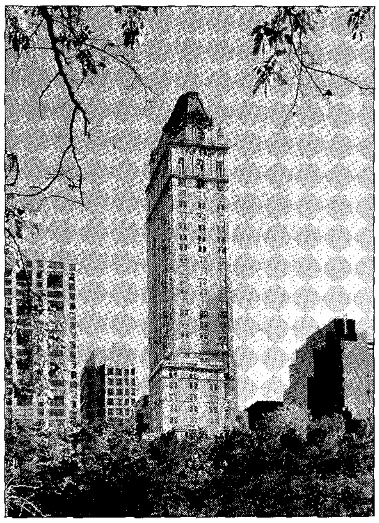
Just one year before that, he had written in the same place:

> The most interesting person I've seen in ages is a 16-year-old girl from Ohio, whose specialty is making a muscle in her shapely chest wiggle. She came to join a girlesk show and her aunt—a former member of the Beef Trust, who did it for years—taught her.

You can't tell exactly how Winchell manages to shift his gaze without a hitch from the wiggling chest of a sixteen-year-old girl to the dignity of man; you can only watch him shift, as you watch a trick play on a football field.

As early as the spring of 1934, when Winchell, not yet a full-fledged international thinker, went to Chicago for a stage appearance, he was already a figure of such eminence that, while he had not asked anyone for any bodyguards, he got seven—two G-men, three gangsters, and two Chicago police detectives. It was an embarrassing moment. The G-men got on Winchell's train at a Chicago suburb. They told him they had been assigned to him by J. Edgar Hoover, to protect him. Winchell had not met Hoover at this time but had called him on the long-distance telephone occasionally and had printed several complimentary items in his column about the work of the G-men. In Chicago, some independent gangsters were conducting a racket whose victims were high-salaried stage and night-club entertainers. They would come into a dressing room, tell the entertainer that he ought to join an association for the protection of entertainers, and persuade him to draw a check for two or three thousand dollars, sometimes more. The G-men said they had been instructed by Hoover to protect Winchell from any such indignities.

When Winchell and the two G-men got off the train, three gangsters walked over and plucked at his sleeve. These were the two Fiaschetti brothers, cousins of Al Capone, and a third gunman. They glared at the G-men, and Winchell indicated to the G-men that these fellows were acquaintances of his. The G-men permitted them to take Winchell off to one side, but kept an eye on them. Out of their hearing, the Fiaschetti brothers told Winchell that Lucky Luciano, who had become the head gangster in New York when Madden went back to Sing Sing as a parole violator, had telephoned them to watch over him while he was in Chicago. Winchell pointed out to them that Hoover had assigned the two G-men to him. "We're not leaving you," said the Fiaschetti brothers stubbornly. They were true to their word. Winchell had to make the best of a disagreeable situation. He introduced the Fiaschetti brothers and the third gunman to the G-men, and they all nodded to one another frigidly. Win-



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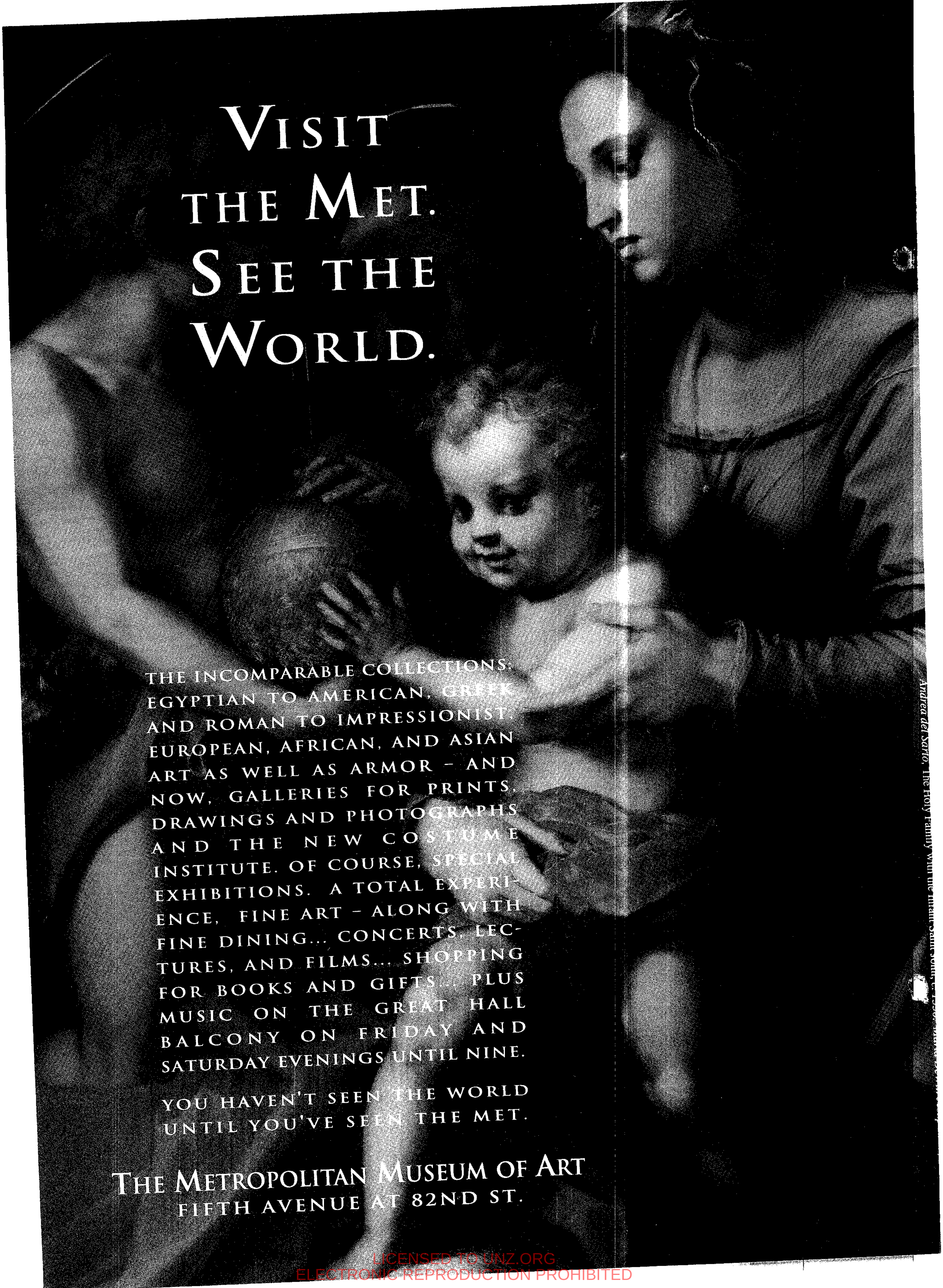

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Andrea del Sarto, The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John, c.

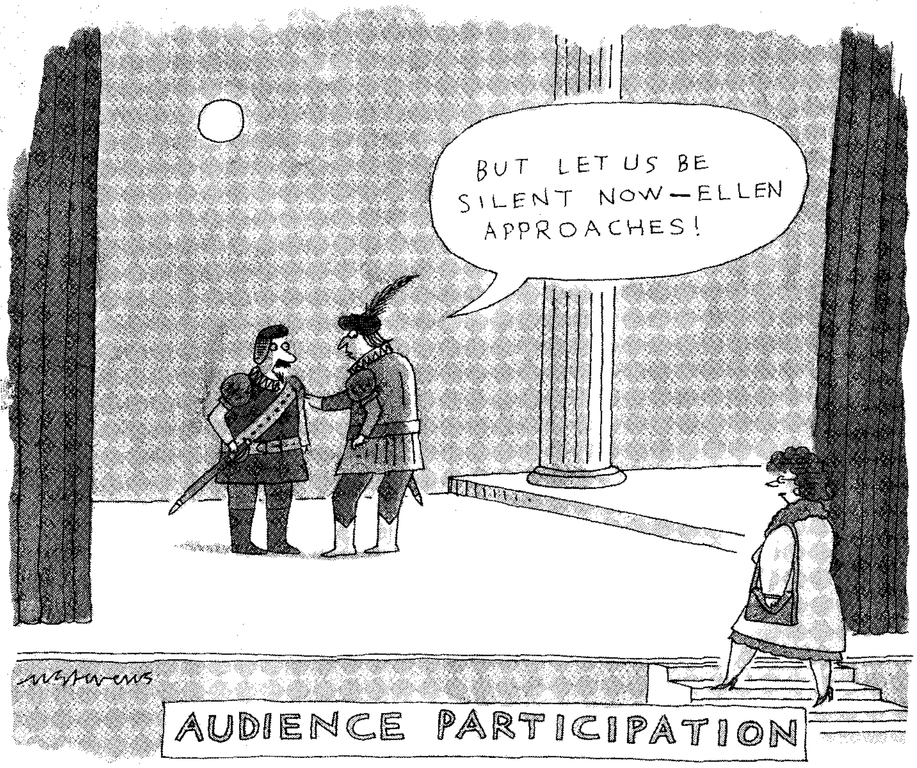
chell then started through the station with the five men following him and was approached by two more bodyguards, the Chicago detectives. They also said they would not leave him. They had been assigned to protect him by the Chicago police chief.

The seven bodyguards stayed with or near Winchell during his entire visit, which lasted a week. Damon Runyon, who happened to be in town, was unable to get into his fellow-journalist's dressing room because either the G-men or the gangsters or the Chicago detectives—he doesn't know which—pushed him into the street. There was a party for Winchell at a Chicago night club and the seven bodyguards all went along. The atmosphere was tense. One of the Fiaschetti brothers at one point said to the other in a loud voice that he was someday going to kill a certain Chicago detective. This detective was sitting across the table. The detective kept his temper. Slurring remarks were made about G-men in general. The G-men kept stiff upper lips.

THE problem of whether J. Edgar Hoover or Lucky Luciano should protect the life of Winchell was not really settled until two years later, when, in 1936, Luciano was sent to prison for his administration of the prostitution racket in New York. The matter came up again after Winchell was assaulted in December, 1935, by two men who stepped out of a doorway on Seventh Avenue between Fifty-second and Fifty-third Streets one evening and punched him in the face. His lip was cut slightly and a pivot tooth was loosened. The identity of these foolhardy individuals was never legally established. Winchell has always claimed that they were Nazis and he has told many people that he afterward settled it "in his own way." The story he has told is that the two men were German waiters at the Waldorf-Astoria and that detectives of the New York police force tracked them down and beat them up but did not arrest them.

In any case, J. Edgar Hoover assigned a bodyguard to Winchell immediately after the assault. By that time, Hoover and Winchell had met and had gone to prizefights together and posed for photographers in night clubs. One picture, taken later on, showed the head G-man holding a toy machine gun and wearing a paper hat at the height of a party at the Stork Club. The agent assigned by Hoover was Guy Hottel, an expert marksman who often accompanies Hoover himself. When Winchell went to Florida that winter, he was assigned a bodyguard by Lucky Luciano, who happened to be there. This bodyguard remained with Winchell for nearly a year, accompanying him to Hollywood when he went there to make a movie.

Winchell's continued friendship with gangsters during this period may have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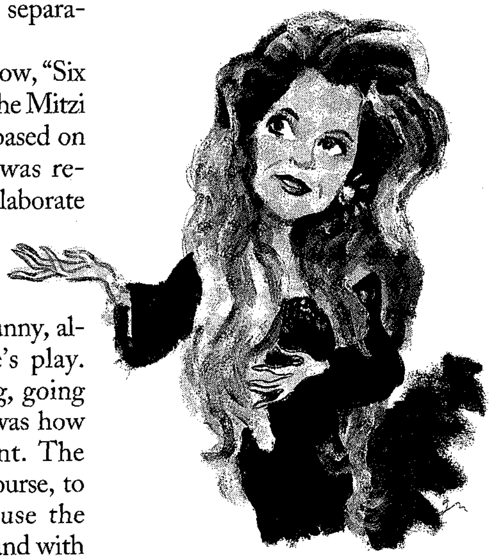
INTERLUDE 1990
"SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION"

SOMEWHERE toward the middle of John Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation," Stockard Channing, playing Ouisa Kittredge, the central character, makes a speech that purports to explain the meaning of the title. Miss Channing is alone onstage; the lights have dimmed, and she has taken up a position on the arm of a sofa. Throughout the speech, she gazes out at undefined spaces in the theatre, and she talks with the lost look and ever-changing face of a born storyteller. Miss Channing, moreover, is so compelling in her impersonation of someone trying to impose meaning on an experience that you just might believe her. You just might be suckered into thinking that what Miss Channing says about "six degrees of separation" was all there was to it.

As everyone knows by now, "Six Degrees of Separation," at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre, is based on a real-life incident that was reported in the *Times*—an elaborate hoax practiced by a young black man on a number of East Side New Yorkers. The story was pretty funny, almost as funny as Guare's play. What I found astonishing, going back to the news article, was how little Guare had to invent. The names were changed, of course, to protect the innocent (I use the word in its broadest sense and with some irony, for these were hardly unworldly people), but ludicrous details one might have attributed to Guare's imagination sprang from a germ of truth: the element of homosexuality, the importance of a Broadway musical, and, most peculiar of all, the fact that the young man, whom Guare christens Paul, presented himself as the son of a famous black actor. All the same, what amazed me most was how out of this story—apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare had fashioned a play about money, race, class, politics, art, collective conscience, and the individual psyche.

The impulse toward storytelling can reveal an interest in truth or in fiction. Guare's fascination with the story of this hoax came from the fact that, in spite of being unbelievable, it was true. His play is about a woman whose fascination with a story that turned out not to be true came from having believed it. Paul fascinates us because he actually makes us feel that the truth doesn't matter. That he does this so effectively is a result of good writing and also of good acting, particularly by James McDaniel, who plays Paul, and Miss Channing. Miss Channing has such a commanding range of contemporary nuance that although Jerry Zaks, the director, works his magic here with an ensemble of seventeen, there are times when Guare's play almost seems like a vehicle for her.



GERARD NICOLAS

Guare's "point," in the end, is something about vibrance—the bursts of color that one longs to see, when, trying to look back on one's life, one finds oneself telling stories. "How do we keep what happened to us without turning it into an anecdote?" Ouisa asks. But the key to Ouisa lies in the play's closing image, the result of a perfect meeting between actress, playwright, and director: the final line and then the expression in Stockard Channing's eyes as she turns in Paul Gallo's slow fade and looks back at the audience one last time. —MIMI KRAMER

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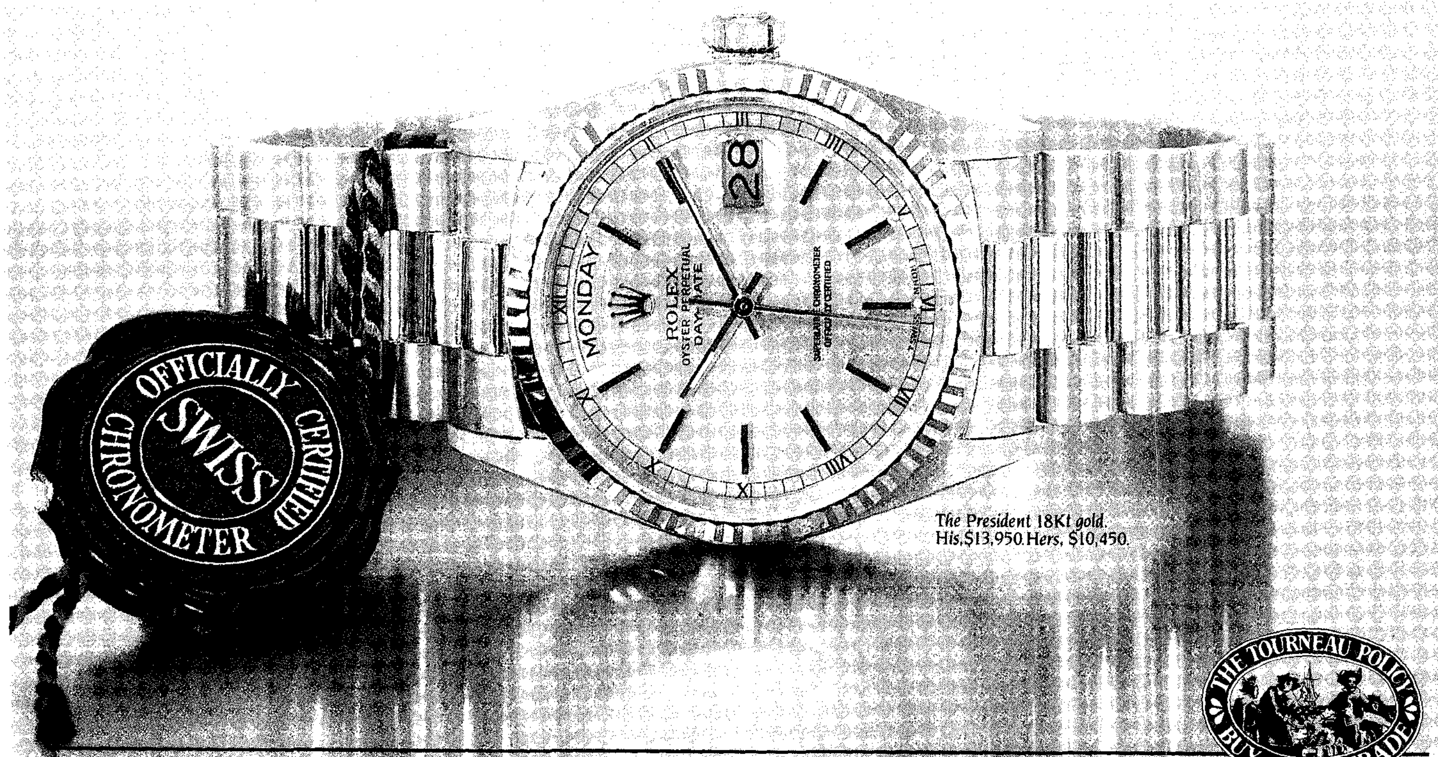
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embarrassed Hoover, but there is no evidence that it did. This might have been due to a certain naïveté which is said to be characteristic of the head G-man. But Winchell's gangster friends have occasionally been embarrassed by his friendship with Hoover. The time Hoover was photographed holding a toy machine gun at the Stork Club, an incident which has subsequently been referred to in Senate debates about Hoover's activities, is a case in point. At the night club that evening was a fairly notorious gunman named Terry Reilly, a man with an appreciable police record. Some of the members of the party thought it would be humorous to have him pose for the photographer with the same toy machine gun. They urged him to do this, but Reilly refused. He was above such frivolous goings on; also, he saw the point of the joke the pranksters had in mind. Hoover did not know who Reilly was, but he was anxious to see good will prevail. Just a few minutes before, he had persuaded Winchell and Louis Sobol to shake hands, thus ending an ancient enmity between the two gossip writers, and he was perhaps feeling his power. He urged Reilly to go ahead and pose. The gunman was obdurate. He was also embarrassed and ill at ease, the more so, probably, because he was on parole at the time for extortion and impersonating a G-man.

He finally excused himself and left the place. Presumably he went home to turn things over in his mind. An unimaginative and conventional fellow, he had been unable to recognize that what had been going on around him in the Stork Club was merely a graphic tableau representing the beginning of a new era. It was New Year's Eve of 1935. Whistles were blowing and there was the bang of champagne corks. Over Reilly's head, while Hoover was trying to persuade him to pose with the toy machine gun, was the Stork Club barbershop, presided over by a barber who had often shaved Madden and Schultz and Luciano, Winchell and Sobol and Sullivan. Hoover had been up to see it that night. Barbers, gangsters, gossip writers, political cynicism, café society. Subtract gangsters and add G-men. Take away political cynicism and put in patriotic hysteria. Barbers, G-men, gossip writers, patriotic hysteria, café society. A whistle and a bang and a hey-nonny-nonny, and a happy new era for Mrs. Winchell's Little Boy Walter. ♦

INTERLUDE WITH ZERO MOSTEL

My real name is Samuel Joel Mostel. The kids in school started calling me Zero, because I was always cutting up in class and appeared to be a hopeless student. I weigh two hundred and thirty-five pounds now; as a kid, I was terribly skinny. When I was seven, I played the part of a Red Cross nurse in a school pageant. I loved doing imitations and getting laughs from the other kids. My family always frowned on acting. My father, who died in 1945, never came to see me on the stage, or when I worked in night clubs or in movies. Being an entertainer of that kind came under the heading of making fun of human beings, which is objectionable in the orthodox Jewish religion. Both my parents had great humor. My mother was a wit, but never a sentimental one. Once, when somebody in our house stepped on our cat's paw, she turned to the cat and said sternly, "I *told* you not to go around barefoot!" About all the occupations I chose, my mother had one word: "Bum!" When I kept asking my father to give in and come to see me entertain, he always said, "I don't want the publicity."

Most comics never bother to equip themselves as actors. But the best comics are also good actors. Chaplin is a wonderful actor. W. C. Fields and Willie Howard and Bobby Clark were real actors, and so are Bert Lahr and Joey Adams and Shelley Berman. In France, the word "*comédien*" actually means both "comedian" and "actor." I wanted to play in the classic comic literature. I wanted to act in plays by Molière, the daddy of all comic invention. I felt that I had to study everything if I wanted to act. I wanted to know how to do Lear and Toby Belch and Falstaff. I had read all of Shaw and Molière by the time I was nineteen. In college, when my English professor was writing "You can't beat Thomas Wolfe" on the blackboard, I was reading "Ulysses" out loud in the alcove with other rebels. Years after, when I was going to play Leopold Bloom in the Off Broadway production of "Ulysses in Nighttown," I found that I knew whole sections of it by heart.

ABE BIRNBAUM

I'm particular about what I give my time to as an actor. I hate all plays with mothers and fathers in them. If I had to play the father of one of those terrible families, I'd flip my lid. I don't like acting when I have to do John loves Mary. I'm just as antagonistic to an Andy Wyeth painting or anything else I don't like.

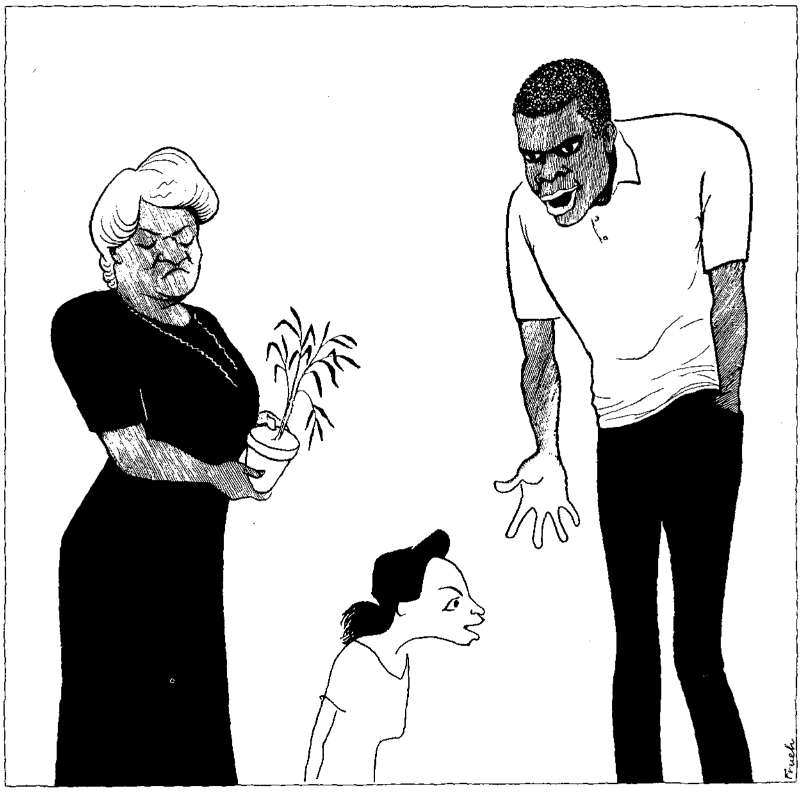
The best guide to acting is Bernard Shaw's phrase "the life force." When all the elements of art enter into it—the distortion, the reality, the naïveté—you have the life force. "Ulysses in Nighttown" is larger than life, and my role was more than an adequate one in it. Working on a role like Bloom requires the exercise of your own taste in large measure. I played in "Ulysses in Nighttown" on and off for two years in New York, London, Paris, and Amsterdam, and never got bored; there was always something new to do, something interesting, something alive. I suppose because I'm a painter I am automatically guided in acting by things that influence my painting. When I played in "Rhinoceros" and was supposed to turn into a rhinoceros, at first the director wanted me to run offstage, stick a horn on my forehead, and become a rhinoceros that way. I preferred to do it all in front of the audience. That's a painterly thing to do. —LILLIAN ROSS

CRITICS' ROUND TABLE

KENNETH TYNAN

Pundit, producer, and panjandrum of England's National Theatre, Kenneth Tynan was The New Yorker's man on the aisle from 1958 to 1960.

THE supreme virtue of "A Raisin in the Sun," Lorraine Hansberry's new play at the Ethel Barrymore, is its proud, joyous proximity to its source, which is life as the dramatist has lived it. I will not pretend to be impervious to the facts; this is the first Broadway production of a work by a colored authoress, and it is also the first Broadway production to have been staged by a colored director. (His name is Lloyd Richards, and he has done a sensible, sensitive, and impeccable job.) I do not see why these facts should be ignored, for a play is not an entity in itself, it is a part of history, and I have no doubt that my knowledge of the historical context predisposed me to like "A Raisin in the Sun" long before the house lights dimmed. Within ten minutes, however, liking had matured into absorption. The relaxed, freewheeling interplay of a magnificent team of Negro actors drew me unresisting into a world of their making, their suffering, their thinking, and their rejoicing. Walter Lee Younger's family lives in a roach-ridden Chicago tenement. The father, at thirty-five, is still a chauffeur, deluded by dreams of financial success that nag at the nerves and tighten the lips of his anxious wife, who ekes out their income by working in white kitchens. If she wants a day off, her mother-in-law advises her to plead flu, because it's respectable. ("Otherwise they'll think you've been cut up or something.") Five people—the others being Walter Lee's progressive young sister, and his only child, an amiable small boy—share three rooms. They want to escape, and their chance comes when Walter Lee's mother receives the insurance money to which her recent widowhood has entitled her. She rejects her son's plan, which is to invest the cash in a liquor store; instead, she buys a house for the family in a district where no Negro has ever lived. Almost at once, white opinion asserts itself, in the shape of a deferential little man from the local Improvement Association, who puts the segregationist case so gently that it almost sounds like a plea for modified togetherness. At the end of a beautifully written scene, he offers to buy back the house, in order—as he explains—to spare the Youngers any possible embarrassment. His proposal is turned down. But before long Walter Lee has lost what remains of the money to a deceitful chum. He announces forthwith that he will go down on his knees to any white man who will buy the house for more than its face value. From this degradation he is finally saved; shame brings him to his feet. The Youngers move out, and move on; a rung has been scaled, a point has been made, a step into the future has been soberly taken.



Claudia McNeil, Ruby Dee, and Sidney Poitier in "A Raisin in the Sun."

Miss Hansberry's piece is not without sentimentality, particularly in its reverent treatment of Walter Lee's mother; brilliantly though Claudia McNeil plays the part, monumentally trudging, upbraiding, disapproving, and consoling, I wish the dramatist had refrained from idealizing such a stolid old conservative. (She forces her daughter, an agnostic, to repeat after her, "In my mother's house *there* is still God.") But elsewhere I have no quibbles. Sidney Poitier blends skittishness, apathy, and riotous despair into his portrait of the mercurial Walter Lee, and Ruby Dee, as his wife, is not afraid to let friction and frankness get the better of conventional affection. Diana Sands is a buoyantly assured kid sister, and Ivan Dixon is a Nigerian intellectual who replies, when she asks him whether Negroes in power would not be just as vicious and corrupt as whites, "I *live* the answer." The cast is flawless, and the teamwork on the first night was as effortless and exuberant as if the play had been running for a hundred performances. I was not present at the opening, twenty-four years ago, of Mr. Odets' "Awake and Sing!," but it must have been a similar occasion, generating the same kind of sympathy and communicating the same kind of warmth. After several curtain calls, the audience began to shout for the author, whereupon Mr. Poitier leaped down

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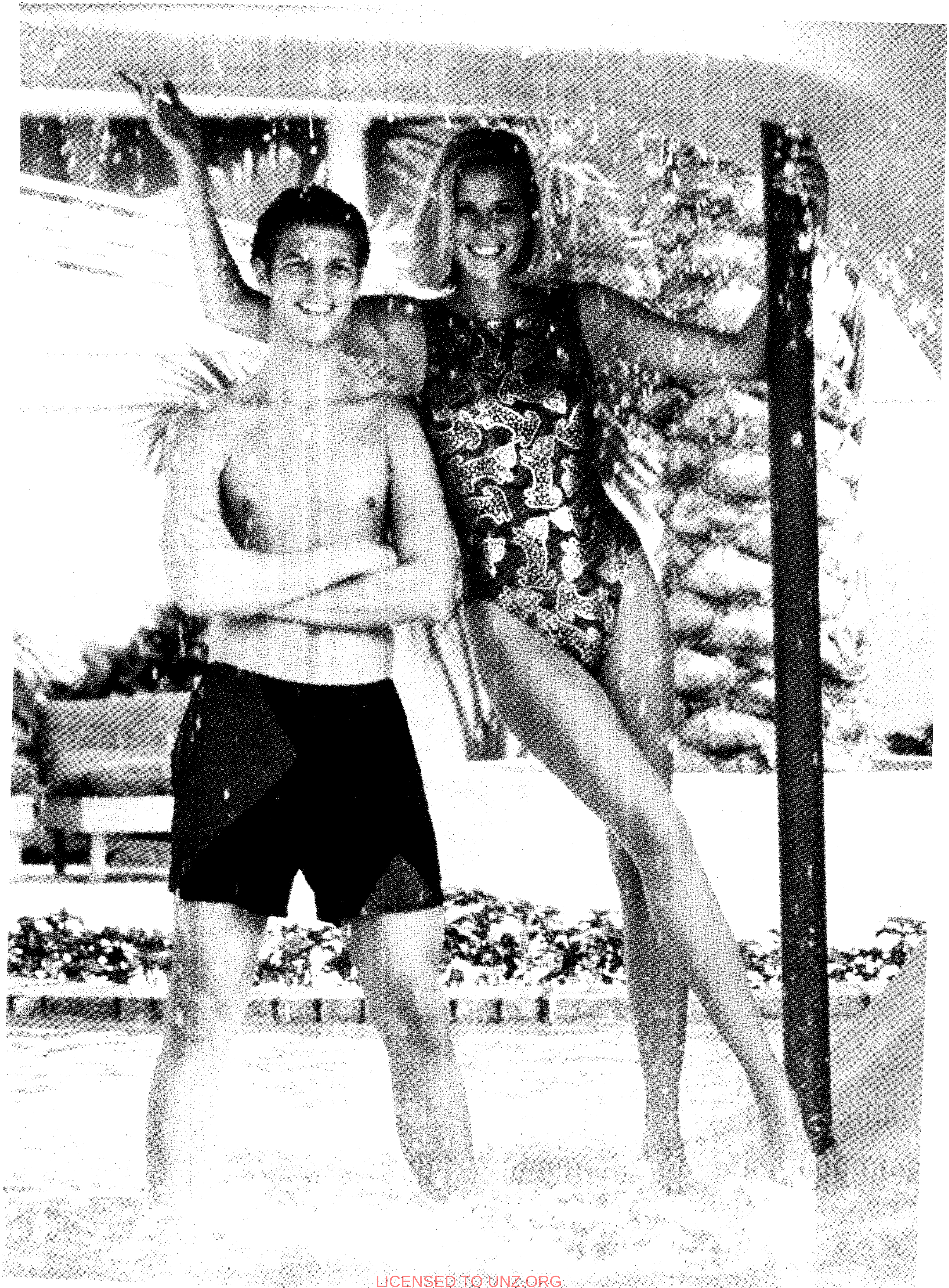

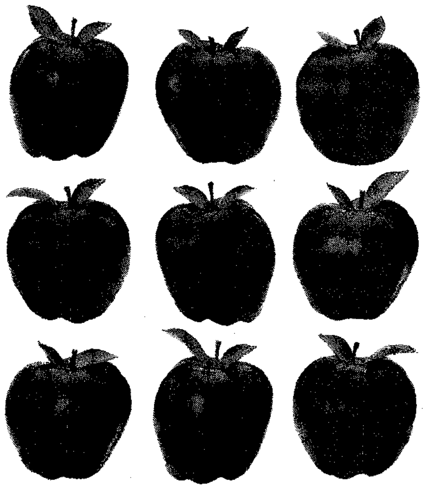

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into the auditorium and dragged Miss Hansberry onto the stage. It was a glorious gesture, but it did no more than the play had already done for all of us. In spirit, we were up there ahead of her.

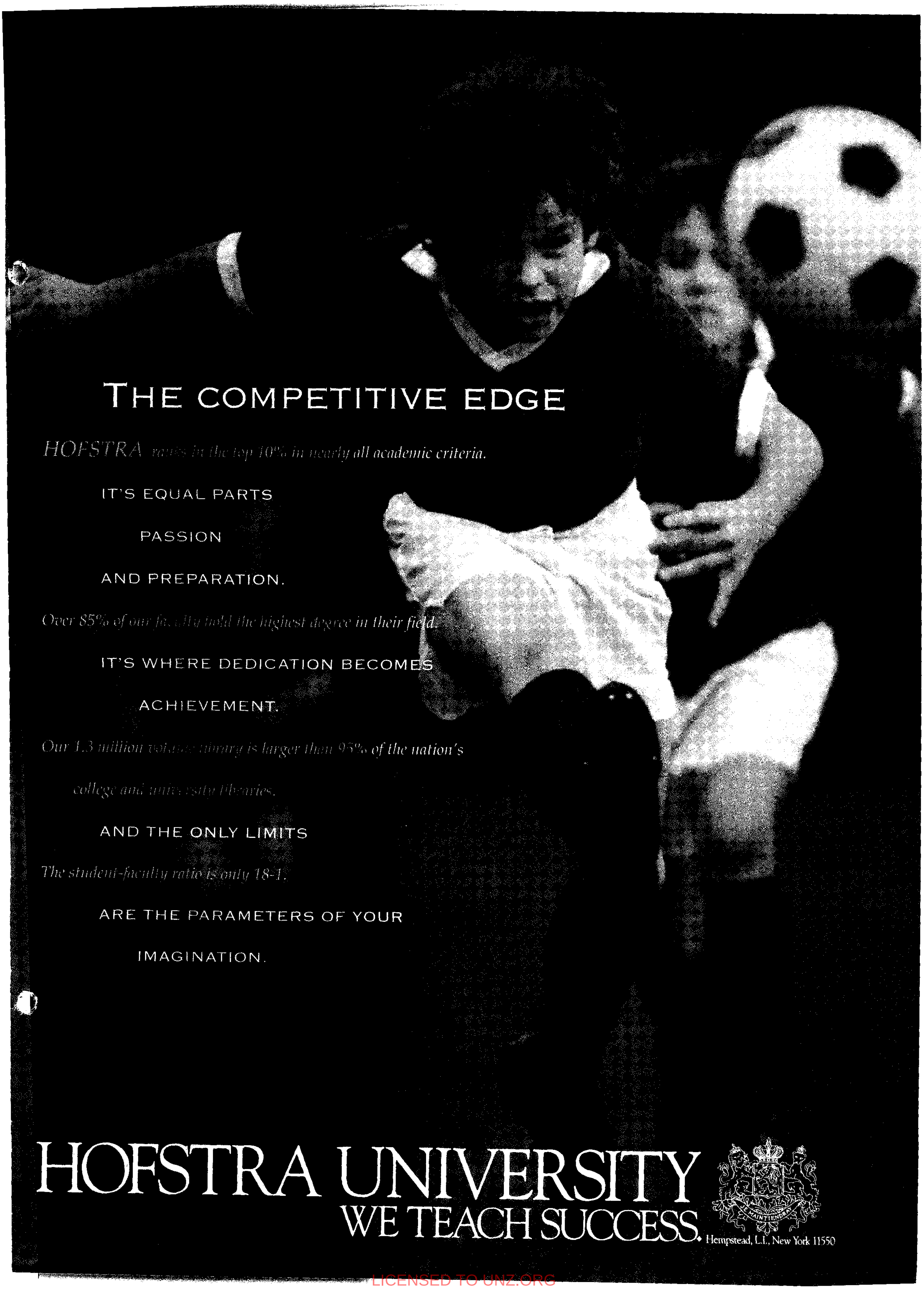
BACKED by a well-drilled revue company, Judy Garland sang in New York last week. The engagement, which is now over, was limited; the pleasure it gave was not. Where else, as they say, but in America would you find Miss Garland at the Metropolitan Opera House while the Bolshoi Ballet was appearing at Madison Square Garden? She had some pretty décor to enshrine her, and a couple of stout supporting performers to keep us amused whenever costume changes forced her offstage. But the magnet was Judy, the buxom minstrel girl, singing—in a variety of costumes, some becoming, some dreadfully not—her repertory of songs about smiling, rejoicing, and suffering. Birds, naturally, flew over the rainbow, the trolley went clang-clang-clang, and the boy next door was just adored. We also heard Harold Arlen's lament for "The Man That Got Away"; "We're a Couple of Swells," in which Miss Garland's hobo makeup lent her a beguiling resemblance to Dylan Thomas; and a cluster of those phony, unforgettable numbers—such as "Swanee" and "Rock-a-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody"—that white composers used to write about the black South. Miss Garland is a squat woman now, and it takes some effort of puckering and wrinkling for her face to achieve the hopeful, trusting smile that first transfixed us. But she can still do it, because she incarnates a dream. She embodies the persistence of youth so completely that we forbid her to develop, and permit her no maturity. Even in young middle age, she must continue to sing about adolescence and all the pain and nostalgia that go with it. When the voice pours out, as rich and pleading as ever, we know where, and how moved, we are—in the presence of a star, and embarrassed by tears.

EVER since Marco Polo, the Orient has exerted a steady and growing influence on the Western imagination. Our debt was increased last week by the arrival at the St. James Theatre of "Flower Drum Song," the new musical by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. In this case, I fear, what we owe is not gratitude but an apology. I am not so demented as to expect from a Broadway show any profound insights into the Chinese temperament. All the same, it was something of a shock, and rather more of a bore, to find the country that cradled Lao-tse, Confucius, and Zen Buddhism treated as if our only clues to its way of life were those provided by the lyrics of "Limehouse Blues" and "Chinatown, My Chinatown."

The authors' attitude toward exotic peoples in general seems to have changed hardly at all since they wrote "South Pacific" and "The King and I." If friendly, the natives have a simple, primitive, childlike sweetness. If girls, they do not know how to kiss, but once they have been taught they are wild about it. They also beg to inquire, please, just what it is that is said with flowers. In their conversation, as you may have gleaned, there is more than a smidgen of pidgin, and I should not have been surprised in the least if the heroine of the present work, which is elsewhere full of self-plagiarism, had at some point embarked on a lyric beginning, "Baby talk, keep talking baby talk." It seems to have worried neither Mr. Rodgers nor Mr. Hammerstein very much that the behavior of war-torn Pacific islanders and nineteenth-century Siamese might be slightly different from that of Chinese residents of present-day California, where "Flower Drum Song" is fictionally sung. So little, indeed, has it worried them that they have entrusted the principal female roles to Japanese actresses. The assumption, which may be justified, is that the audience will not notice the difference.

Perhaps as a riposte to Joshua Logan's "The World of Suzie Wong," Rodgers and Hammerstein have given us what, if I had any self-control at all, I would refrain from describing as a world of woozy song.

HAVING been pursued by William Faulkner's "Requiem for a Nun" across half a continent and the whole of an ocean, I begin to understand how Francis Thompson must have felt when the Hound of Heaven picked up his spoor. In three years, the play has tailed me from Berlin to New York, via Paris, Madrid, and London; wherever I go



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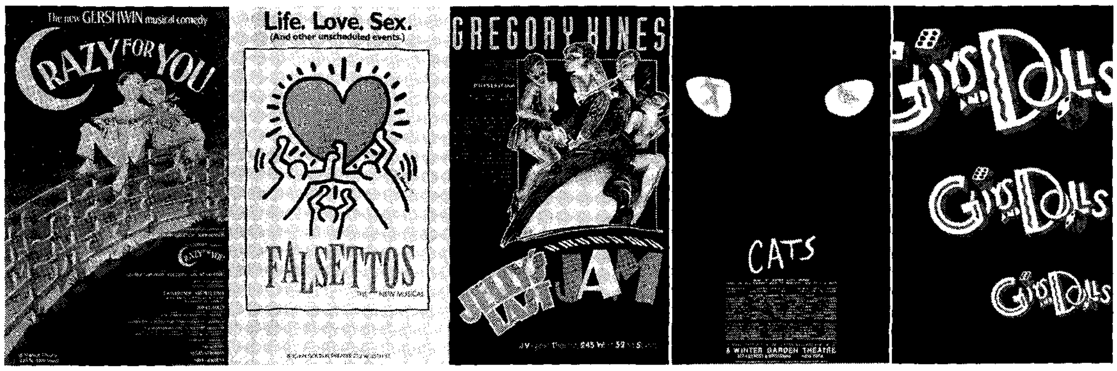
into hiding, it goes into rehearsal. Last week, at the John Golden Theatre, it got its man for the fourth time. (I contrived to miss the Spanish production by lying about my health. According to Mr. Faulkner, we pay for our sins through the suffering of others. Judging by the expression on the face of my companion at the Broadway opening, I have paid in full.) My long international association with the piece has taught me a lot about the mental processes of the people who like it. They are usually ready to concede that the writing is dense and prolix, the characterization crucially inconsistent, and the construction primitive, but what do these superficial considerations matter, they ask, in a work that goes to the very roots of the human condition?

The short answer is (a) a great deal and (b) it doesn't. To start by enlarging on (a), Mr. Faulkner's play is essentially undramatized. It is a sequel to his novel "Sanctuary," which dealt with the early life of a girl named Temple Drake and her springtime awakening to nymphomania. A mean, moody, and munificent premonition of Lolita, Miss Drake got herself involved, while still at college, in a car crash, with a drunken lover at the wheel. After witnessing a murder, she was kidnapped by a midget voyeur called Popeye and imprisoned in a Memphis brothel, where she liked the work so much that she fell in love with a regular customer, who was regrettably slain on his way to her bed. Before the play begins, she has married the drunken driver, now dried out into respectability, and borne him two children, one of whom has been murdered by her maid, Nancy, a "nigger dope-fiend whore" she befriended in captivity. All this comes under the heading of "what has gone before," and the problems of putting it across are gigantic. Mr. Faulkner tackles them by wasting most of the evening on exposition in its least dramatic form—retrospective narration in the first person. Guilt-stricken because of Nancy's impending execution, Temple spills her turbid story to the Governor of the state, at such length that by the time we know what happened before the curtain rose, the curtain is about to fall. One swift flashback breaks the monotony; otherwise, we are wearied by detailed descriptions of events we have not seen and people we have not met. And what descriptions! Sentences as interminably woolly as unravelled sweaters alternate with moral saws that are either turgid restatements of platitudes or stammering attempts at paradox. Here and there, a hardy phrase stands out from the vast heap of collapsed prose, but for the most part the style nags the thought to death. It frankly enraged me, but, as Mr. Faulkner might say, man may not utter in anger, or wrath, or what passes with him for anger and wrath, if anything does, and not be defiled, or tarnished, or lastingly unstrung.

The play's basic flaw, however, is its handling of Nancy. For one thing, we are never told how the dope-hooked prostitute of the exposition developed into the model of glowing piety that we see on the stage. For another—and this is where we verge on (b)—Mr. Faulkner's explanation of why Nancy committed infanticide seems to me profoundly



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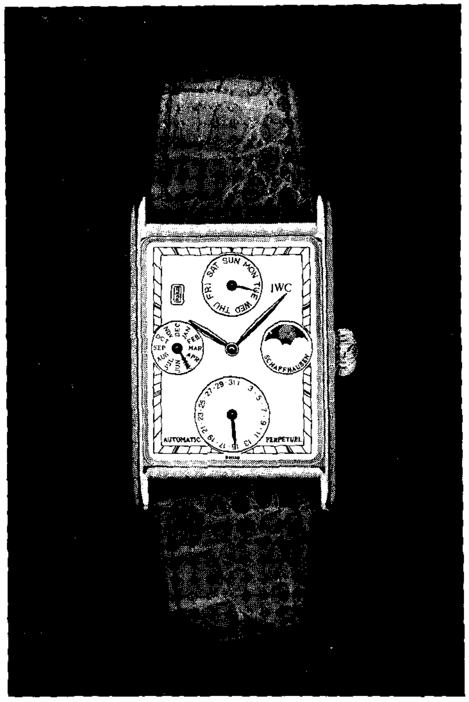

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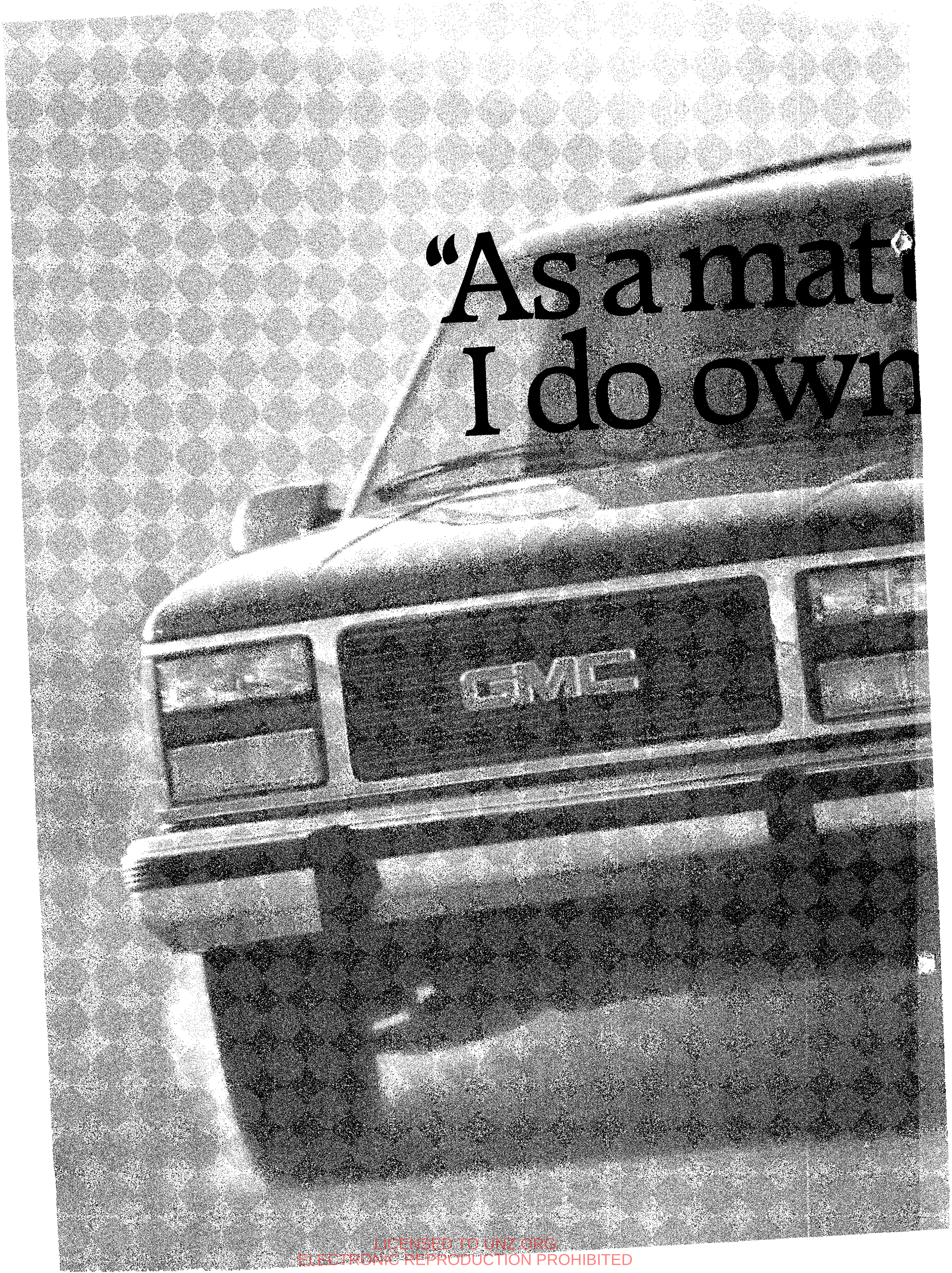
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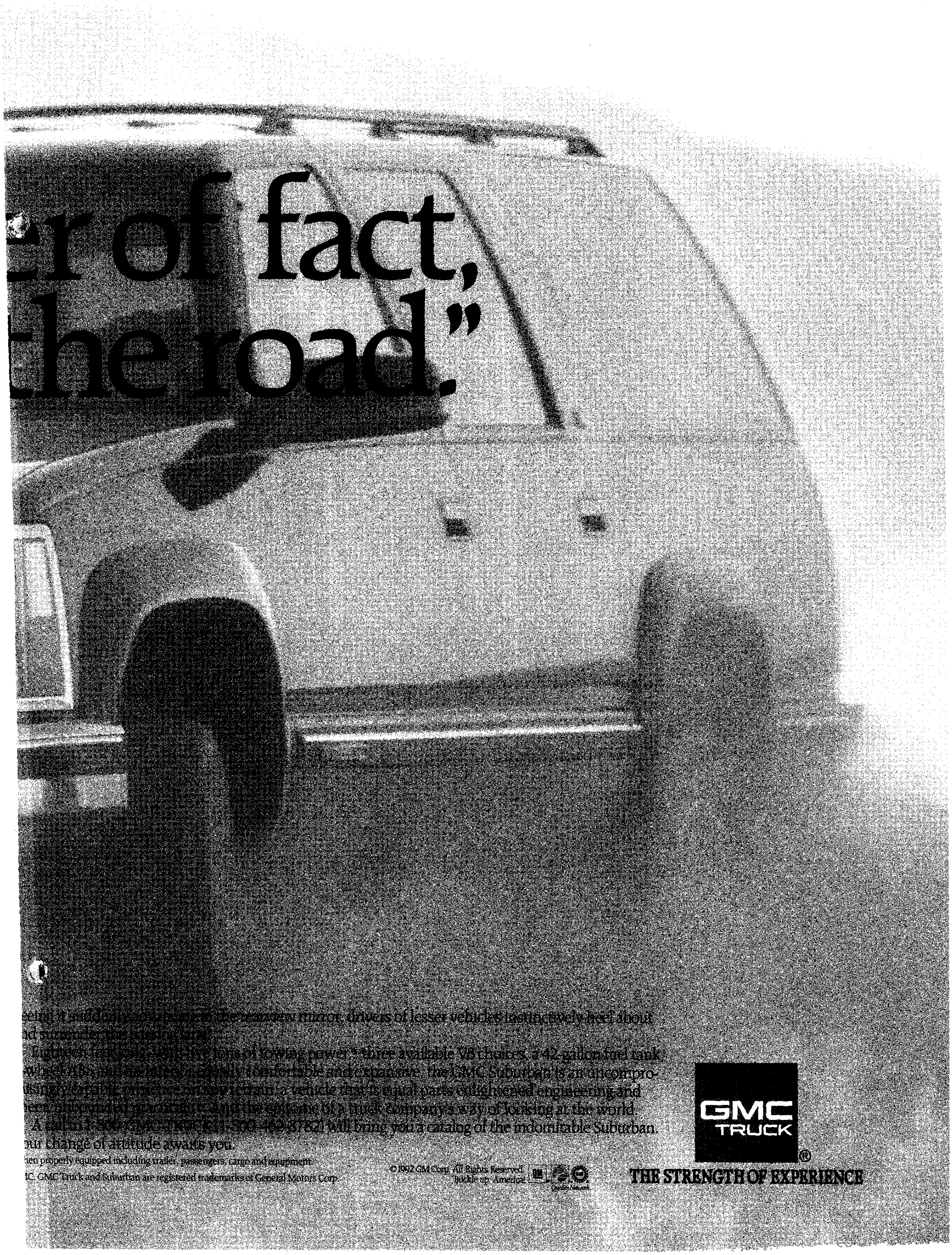

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unreal, if not inhuman. Temple, we learn, was about to leave her husband for a new lover; Nancy slaughtered the baby to keep it from being tainted by its mother's sins, and also to dissuade Temple from wrecking her marriage. I should have thought that a live child, however tainted, was worthier of preservation than a dying marriage, but Nancy goes to the noose contentedly singing spirituals, with the author's full approval of her self-sacrifice. Maybe that's why darkies were born—to hold white couples together.

Tony Richardson's direction is, to put it gently, unobtrusive, or, to put it truly, limp; the text is intoned rather than embodied. Bertice Reading, with wide eyes and a face full of tears, makes a nobly symbolic figure of the incredible Nancy, and Zachary Scott grinds meatily away as her lawyer, but Ruth Ford is an arid, anonymous Temple ("What a personality that girl needs!" I said to myself, echoing a famous impromptu of Richard Haydn's), and I assure the actor who plays her husband that it is possible to convey passion without inhaling audibly through the nose twice in every sentence.

QUITE apart from considerations of subject matter, perfection of style can be profoundly moving in its own right. If anyone doubts that, he had better rush to the Broadway Theatre and buy a ticket for "Gypsy," the first half of which brings together in effortless coalition all the arts of the American musical stage at their highest point of development. So smooth is the blending of skills, so precise the interlocking of song, speech, and dance, that the sheer contemplation of technique becomes a thrilling emotional experience. It is like being present at the triumphant solution of some harsh architectural problem; stone after massive stone is nudged and juggled into place, with a balance so nice that the finished structure seems as light as an exhalation, though in fact it is earthquakeproof. Book, lyrics, music, décor, choreography, and cast seem not—as so often occurs—to have been conscripted into uneasy and unconvinced alliance but to have come together by irresistible mutual attraction, as if each could not live without the rest. With no strain or dissonance, a machine has been assembled that is ideally fitted to perform this task and no other. Since the task is worthwhile, the result is art.

As everyone must surely be aware, the show is based on the memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee, the renowned kimonophobe (to use a word of George Jean Nathan's) whose intellectual aspirations were gently pinked by Rodgers and Hart in a song called "Zip." Miss Lee's account of her early life in vaudeville and her subsequent transition to burlesque stripping was dominated by the eccentric, outspoken, and wildly propulsive figure of Rose, her mother. The latter, a nightmare incarnation of Noël Coward's Mrs. Worthington, put her two daughters on the stage as soon as they could walk, and kept them there, as a coy and piping child act, until both were well into their teens. They had no formal—and very little informal—education. Their parents were divorced when Gypsy, the elder of the sisters, was four years old, and although their mother afterward ran through two other husbands, the liaison in

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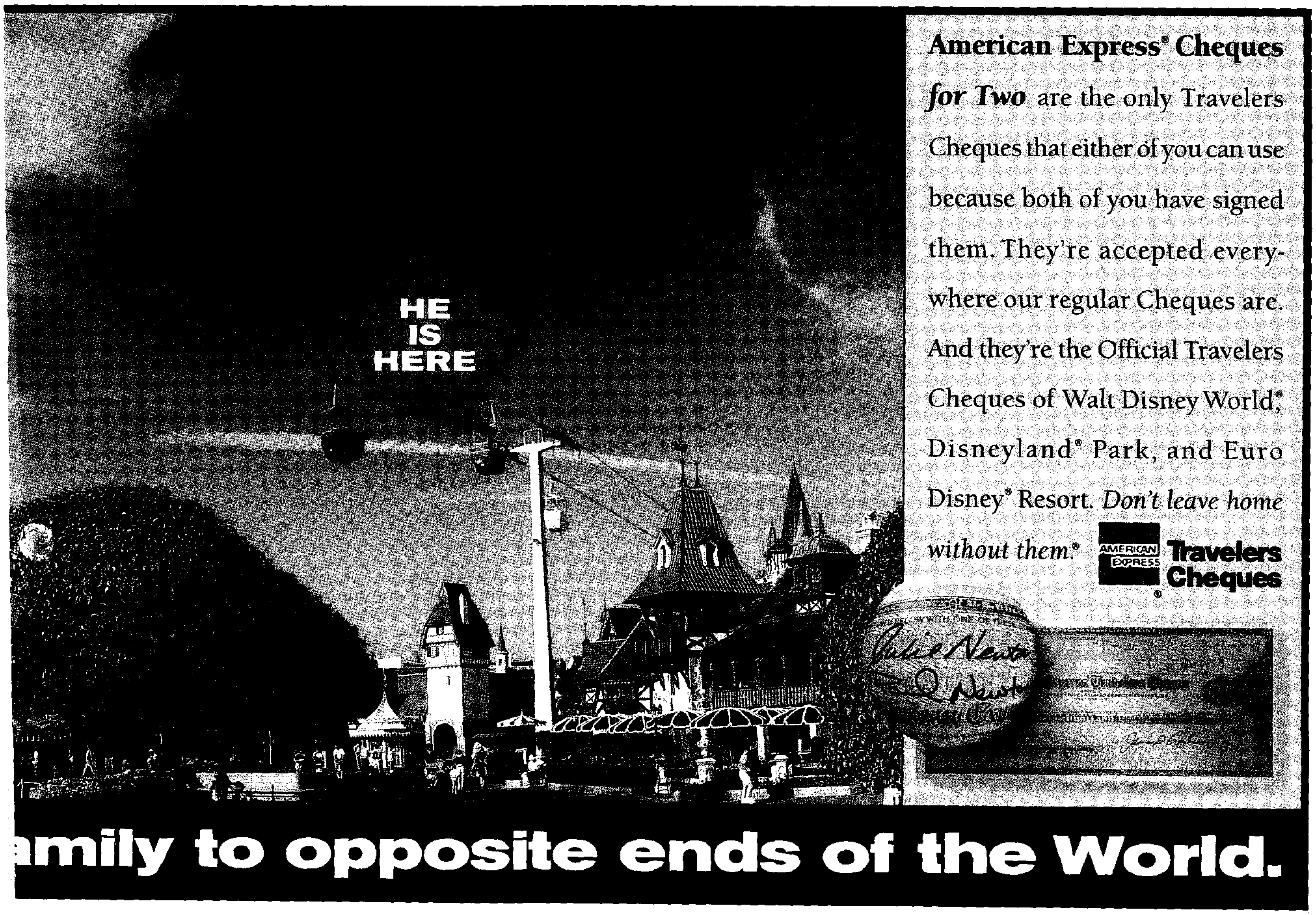
each case was brief, and it cannot be said that the girls ever felt truly fathered. Rose's pride and cynosure was her younger daughter, Baby June, who has recently published, under her present stage name of June Havoc, an autobiography in which her mother appears as a total monster, forever pressing the children's noses to the grindstone of her own frustrated ambitions. The show at the Broadway takes Miss Lee's view, which is rather more temperate; the element of vicarious fulfillment is unmistakably there, but we are encouraged to admire Rose's shrewdness as much as to dislike her possessiveness. The credit for the whole physical gesture of the evening belongs to Jerome Robbins, who, as director and choreographer, has poured into "Gypsy" the same abundance of invention with which he galvanized "West Side Story." From the latter show he has borrowed a lyricist, Stephen Sondheim, and a librettist, Arthur Laurents, both of whom have brought to their new jobs an exemplary mixture of gaiety, warmth, and critical intelligence.

Above all, we must linger on Ethel Merman, the most relaxed brass section on earth, singing her heart out and missing none of her own inimitable tricks, among them her habit of sliding down to important words from a grace note above, which supplies the flick that precedes the vocal whipcrack. But Miss Merman not only sings; she acts. I would not say that she acts very subtly; Rose, after all, with her dreams of glory, her kleptomania, her savage parsimony, and her passion for exotic animals and Chinese breakfasts, is scarcely a subtle character. Someone in the show describes her as "a pioneer woman without a frontier," and that is what Miss Merman magnificently plays.

The second half, which is briefer, is also less effective. There are several reasons for this. One has to do with plot; having seen the grooming of Baby June, we now watch the grooming of Gypsy, and this makes for redundancy. Another is that Act II contains only three new songs; the rest are reprises. A third is the lack, felt ever more urgently as the hours tick by, of a good, solid male singer; Jack Klugman, the show's nearest approach to a hero, is an amiable actor, but his voice is no more than an amplified snore. Fourth, Sandra Church is too chaste in demeanor to reproduce the guileful, unhurried carnality with which the real Gypsy undressed. Fifth, we have the finale. Rejected by both her daughters, Miss Merman plods onto the empty stage and bursts into a song about how she could have been better than either of them, given the chance. No sooner has she embarked on what promises to be a burlesque routine of staggering panache than the authors cut in to remind her of their purpose, which is to demonstrate the beastliness of managing mothers. Accordingly, she breaks off in mid-phrase, and sets about lacerating herself in prose. This, I felt, was a case of integrity carried too far. Once Miss Merman has started to sing, nothing short of an air-raid warning should be allowed to interrupt her. To mute her at this point is an act of presumption, and the evening suffers from it. The latter half has in its favor a flamboyant trio of strippers, one of whom peels with her left hand while playing a trumpet with her right. But I don't see how anyone could deny that the show tapers off from perfection in the first act to mere brilliance in the second. ♦



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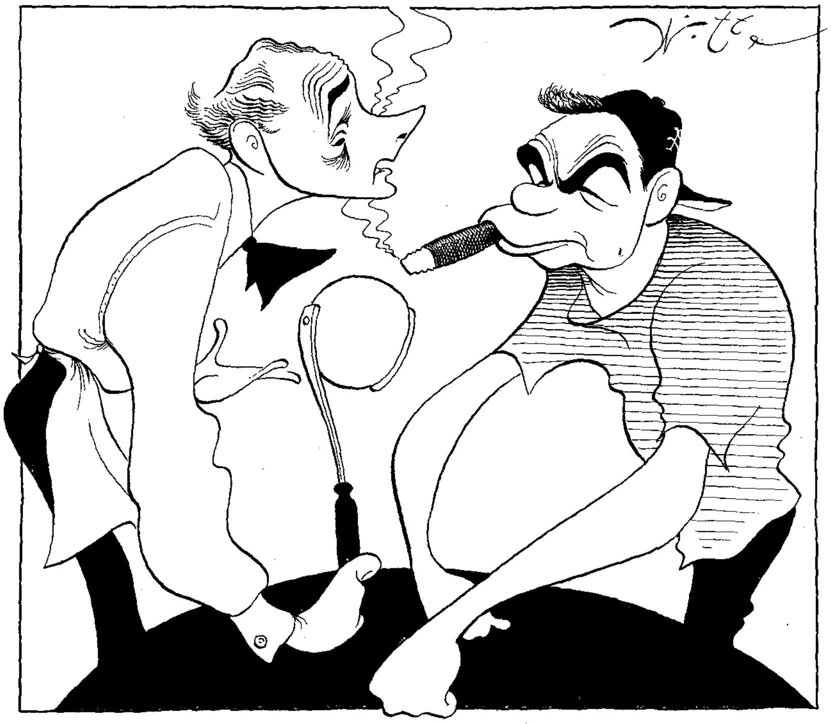
INTERVIEW

RUMPLED ROYALTY

Walter Matthau, the doyen of the droll,
talks about turning his funny face into a future.

BY LILLIAN ROSS

In junior high school, I found out that I could make the other kids laugh with my imitations of movie stars. I played my first role in a play at a settlement house on Second Avenue—a toff in "A Night at an Inn." Soon after that, at another settlement house, I played Polonius in "Hamlet." When I was eleven, I started working for the candy concessionaires, selling ice cream and soda pop, in most of the Yiddish theatres along Second Avenue, for a fifteen-per-cent commission on all sales—places like the Second Avenue Theatre and the Public and the National. I worked in those theatres for five years. I got to see many of the leading Yiddish actors, like Julius Nathanson, Herman Yablokoff, and Michael Rosenberg. I watched the way they worked. The idea of becoming an actor was lurking somewhere in my head. The Yiddish actor who made the strongest impression on me was Michael Rosenberg. The minute he walked onstage, he had his audience. He brought a whole world out with him. He was just a little guy who wore wigs and beards—very unprepossessing offstage—but he was the most interesting actor I've ever seen. He had electricity. I learned something of what I know about comic timing from him. I played bit parts in Yiddish musical comedies, which were actually comedy-tragedies with music, with marvellous actor-comedians like Leo Fuchs. I earned fifty cents a night, for seven performances a week. I soaked up everything around me just being there. I used to feel wonderful in the theatres—with the actors talking to each other, the girls changing costumes, the smell of stale smoke, the dampness, the upholstered chairs, the musty rugs, the buzzing in the audience and the dead silence just before the curtain went up. During intermissions, I'd run out to the audience and sell my ice



MICHAEL WITTE

Art Carney and Walter Matthau in "The Odd Couple."

cream and soda pop, which netted me about two dollars and fifty cents for a good week, in addition to what I earned as an actor.

In high school, I didn't go out with girls very much, and I refused to go to dances. Instead, I read plenty of Shakespeare. I'd lock myself in the bathroom and read the plays and poems out loud to myself for two or three hours at a stretch; I liked the sound of them. I managed the campaigns of kids running for office in the student government, and every time I got up in the school auditorium to make a campaign speech, the audience would start to laugh even before I opened my mouth. There was always something about the way I stood or looked or sounded.

When I heard that the New School for Social Research Dramatic Workshop, run by Erwin Piscator, was at the old President Theatre, a block and a half away from Madison Square Garden, where I liked to hang out and watch hockey and basketball games and the fights, I decided to go there.

Piscator would come around two days before the opening of the plays we put on every couple of months. He'd redo everything the director had done. I began to get more of the real feeling for acting from him. Once, I was playing Sadovsky in Nikolai Pogodin's "Aristocrats," and he came around and said, "Matthau, you say here every line wrong." Another actor might have been destroyed. I was destroyed for about twenty seconds. Then I said, "Teach me how to say every line right."

In those days, I did a great deal of brooding about myself. I wasn't handsome. I didn't have good clothes. I used to wonder why people would hire me when they could get college graduates and Oxford scholars. Then it became apparent that, when I got up on a stage, people actually wanted to look at me. What did I have to offer? I was a big, rugged-looking guy with a big, strong voice. There was that. Also, I had a way of showing enormous ease and enormous power onstage, both of which were valuable in the theatre. The first time I really believed it was when Piscator saw me as a judge in "Volpone" and said he was impressed. I began to believe that whatever I did onstage was important to an audience. And then I began to take seriously the idea that I was going to devote my life to being an

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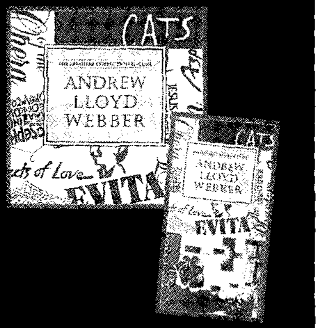

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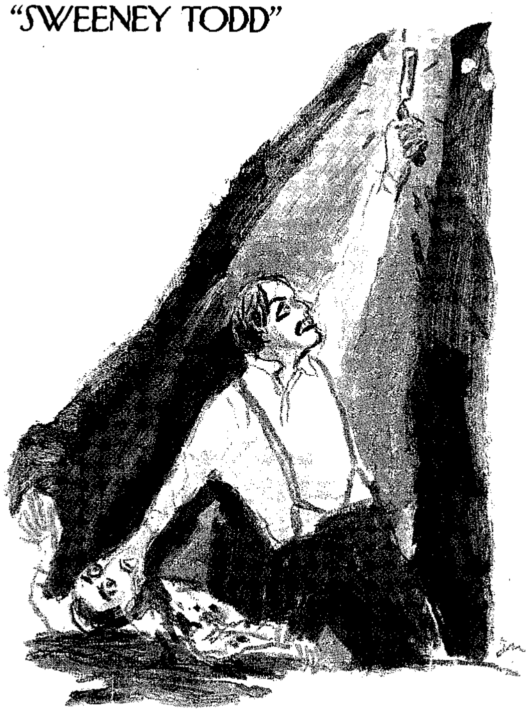
actor. When I got my first real job on Broadway, late in 1948, at a hundred dollars a week, as a candelabrum-carrier in the coronation scene and an understudy to seven old men in "Anne of the Thousand Days," I was ecstatic. I walked up to strangers and told them about it. I was even proud that the combined ages of the seven old men came to four hundred and ninety-two.

It's on the stage that I feel comfortable, relaxed, fulfilled, delighted. I'm happy doing stage plays. Working for the screen is almost like being in the Army; you set your mind to it and you do it. On the stage, you're wide open. There are no tricks with the camera to make you look a certain way. Nobody is going to cut you out, either. The people are sitting out there, and they're going to see you full on. Nobody can fool around with your face. Nobody can fool around with your voice. You can taste and smell what the audience feels. You know if you're coming across. I love to feel I have the whole stage in the palm of my hand. It's what every actor looks for. On the stage, you have a chance to work on a part, and then to work on it some more. Sometimes it takes me six months before I find out what a line means, even if the writing is superficial. Six months after I opened in "Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?" I stopped seeing the printed page, with all the commas and all the notations.

I like to watch a prizefighter, or a basketball player, not another actor, whose clichés I might automatically pick up. But I like to watch great actors like Olivier or Brando. They have no bad habits I could pick up. I got a sense of a big leap forward in 1952 when I was given the part of the cultivated, fastidious art critic in "Fancy Meeting You Again." I told Leueen MacGrath, the co-author, with George S. Kaufman, that I doubted whether I could fall in love with the classy girl I was supposed to fall in love with in the play; I wasn't well bred enough. Miss MacGrath, who played the part of the girl herself, told me off for what she called my inverted snobbism, and said that I was talking about myself and not the character I was playing. That gave me the shock I needed. When, finally, I was accepted as well bred and I kissed the girl in the play and it was believed by the audience, it opened up a whole new phase of acting for me. In fact, that's when I became an *actor*. ♦

INTERLUDE 1979
"SWEENEY TODD"



GERARD NICOLAS

"SWEENEY TODD" is a rowdy Victorian melodrama about a murderous London barber and his lady friend and confederate, Mrs. Lovett, whose business is the manufacture and sale of meat pies—a business for which the barber's nefarious activities provide a ready supply of the pies' basic ingredient, and I don't mean dough. There are many existing versions of "Sweeney Todd," but up to last Thursday evening, when a new musical version of the old warhorse sent uncountable gallons of blood gushing across the ample stage of the Uris, the only production familiar to me was the comparatively non-liquid one that is often given in the kitchen of Castletown House, just outside Dublin.

"Sweeney Todd" has been composed as if it were an opera; snatches of dialogue furnish a scaffolding over which, none too prudently, we clamber from one song to the next. There are something like twenty-five songs in all, and they are so tightly woven into the fabric of the plot that I doubt if they will prove extractable. (I ought to add that I have expressed this doubt about earlier Stephen Sondheim songs and have nearly always been proved wrong.) Sondheim's lyrics, often harsh in content, are characteristically nimble, their rhymes piling up—in Porter-like, piggyback fashion—three, four, and five times. As for Hugh Wheeler, who wrote the book, his ear is somewhat too careless for my taste; I don't expect nineteenth-century Londoners to say "Farewell" on one occasion and "So long" on another, much less to use our contemporary slang phrase "lose your marbles." The very large cast of the show is exemplary. Len Cariou, as Todd, sings superbly, and Angela Lansbury, as Mrs. Lovett, is a droll, amoral baggage, condoning murder only when it happens to serve a useful purpose. Victor Garber, Merle Louise, Ken Jennings, Edmund Lyndeck, and Jack Eric Williams speak and sing with authority; I seem to hear behind them the voice of the director, Harold Prince, who well knows the value of vehemence in the proper time and place.

A formidable amount of talent and skill has been expended upon "Sweeney Todd," and I suspect that the amount of pleasure you derive from it will prove to be in proportion to how strong a stomach you have for blood (imitation blood in this case) and how funny you think the subject of mass murder is. I admit my prejudice: it isn't a subject that sends me into gales of helpless laughter, because I am too much in fear of a time when the Sweeney Todds of this world will have become a commonplace. That dark thought is, of course, many a long league away from Sondheim, Wheeler, and Prince, whose purpose has been simply and chillingly to give us all a good old-fashioned scare. That they have done; I am steering clear these days of trapdoors, straight razors, and the more complexly bestrewn pizzas.

—BRENDAN GILL

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The effects of untreated high blood pressure often strike without warning. While high blood pressure (hypertension) by itself might not show any symptoms, there are a range of complications that can result in permanent impairment or death. The complications show up...

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Through other problems

Not only are the blood vessels going to your brain affected by high blood pressure, but also the vessels to your heart may be seriously damaged. This results in chest pain (angina pectoris) or a heart attack (myocardial infarction). Hypertension also can trigger problems with the flow of blood to your kidneys, your eyes, or your hands and feet.

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While individuals of any age can get high blood pressure, it is far more common in older age groups. It affects close to half the population over the age of 64. Under the age of 50, hypertension is more common in men than in women. After 55 or 60, it is more common in women than in men. Yet more men die from hypertension complications than do women.

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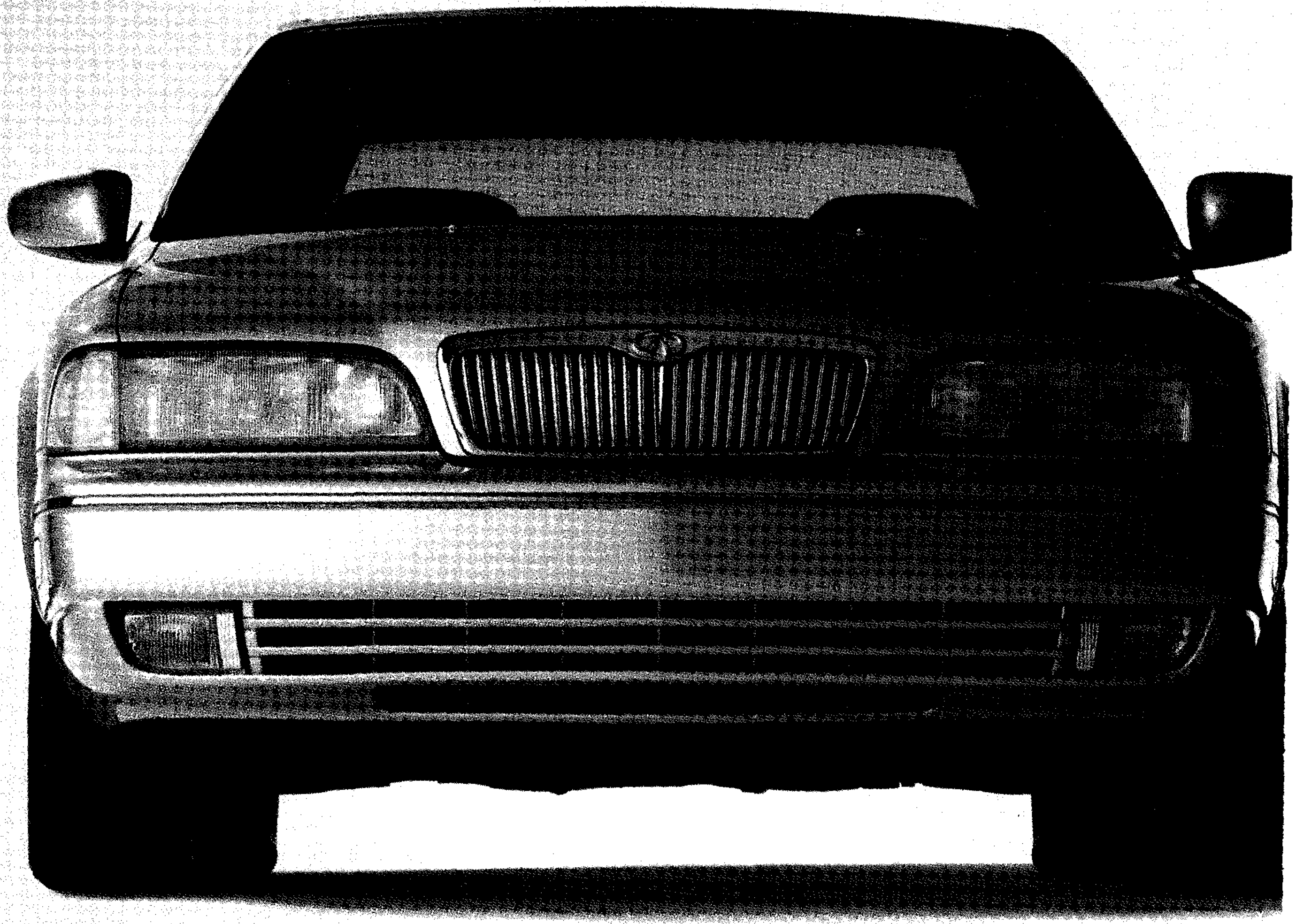

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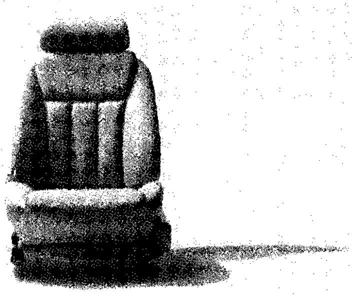

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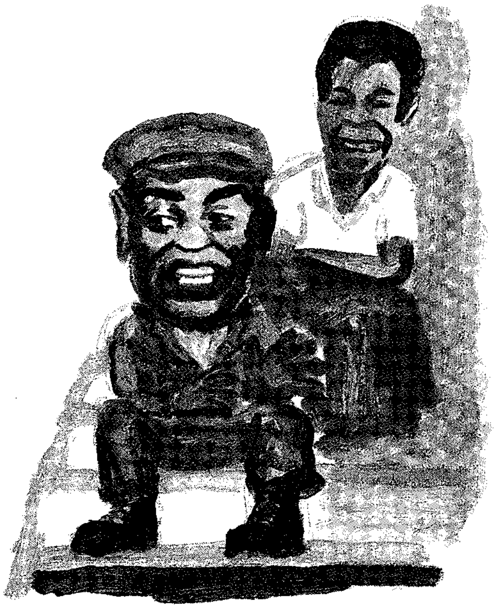
INTERLUDE 1987
"FENCES"

When August Wilson's "Fences" was first done, at the O'Neill Playwrights' Conference, in Waterford, Connecticut, four years ago, I acted as a kind of adviser on the script during rehearsals. As I remember, I didn't say much except "Leave it alone, for now." In that early form, it ran well over four hours. Last week, it opened on Broadway, at the Forty-sixth Street, trimmed and shaped, in a triumphant production under the direction of Lloyd Richards, who also collaborated on the text. Although it is entirely different in form and feeling from Mr. Wilson's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," it is just as powerful, and I think even richer.

The hero of "Fences," and hero he is indeed—a flawed giant—is a garbageman of fifty-six named Troy Maxson. Once a baseball player of professional ability, he was prevented by his color from playing in the major leagues. The time is the late nineteen-fifties—post-Jackie Robinson but too late for Troy. A baseball hangs on a cord in the back yard of his shabby house in a poor section of some Northern city, and he whacks away at it angrily throughout the action. There is no aspect of his life in which he does not feel constricted—fenced in—and in James Earl Jones' towering performance one can almost see him bursting at the seams. Because he is black, he is not allowed to drive the garbage truck but must always work behind, lifting and dumping (until he complains to the union and wins). He is constricted by his feelings, a mixture of bitter jealousy and protectiveness, about his younger son, Cory, who has been recruited for a football scholarship at a nearby college; afraid that the boy will be hurt as he has been in the world of sports, and beside himself with envy, he refuses to let the boy accept it. He even feels fenced in, it turns out, by his happy marriage to a woman he loves, and he has an affair with a much younger woman, impairing his happiness for the rest of his life. There is, by the way, an actual fence, which he and the younger son are building for the wife, who seems to want to hold in what she cherishes most.

While the tension between Troy and Cory may be the most important element of the play, it is only one among several. Troy, of course, dominates all, and Mr. Jones brings every side of this complex man to light. Splendid though the performance is, it is no better than that of radiant Mary Alice, who plays his wife, Rose, with her usual depth and humor and passion. In fact, all the actors are faultless, under Mr. Richards' masterly direction, and so are the characters they portray. As Cory, young Courtney B. Vance, at first rebellious and resentful, yet at the end almost seeming to acquire his father's stature, gives an indelible performance. Mr. Wilson's play, like Mr. Jones' Troy, is bursting at the seams with vigor and emotion and fun and poetry. —Edith Oliver



GERARD NICOLAS

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ANGELS ON BROADWAY

Tony Kushner brings the siècle to an early fin with an epic that puts gay life in the mainstream of American culture.

BY JOHN LAHR

"AND how else should an angel land on earth but with the utmost difficulty?" Tony Kushner wrote to the cast of "Angels in America," his saga about gay life and the politics of sexuality, when its two parts made their American première at the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles, last fall. "If we are to be visited by angels we will have to call them down with sweat and strain." All the sweat and strain in transferring this ambitious epic to Broadway are now over, and its first part, "Millennium Approaches," under the expert stewardship of the director George C. Wolfe, has landed in fine fettle at the Walter Kerr Theatre. The New York version has benefitted and borrowed from its two previous award-winning productions, at the Royal National Theatre, in London (the Evening Standard Award), and at the Taper (the Pulitzer Prize). The script is leaner, the acting dynamics are more defined, the cast is more uniformly up to the performing mark. On balance, despite casting quibbles and a reductive set, the production comes closest so far to the pulse and the depth of Kushner's gorgeous work.

The power of "Angels in America" is in the combination of Kushner's wise heart and shrewd narrative. Here, teeming with good talk and good humor, is that almost forgotten ingredient of contemporary American theatre—good story. Instead of doing "political theatre," Kushner does theatre politically. Taking its epigraph from the Stanley Kunitz poem "The Testing-Tree"—

> In a murderous time
> the heart breaks and breaks
> and lives by breaking—

"Angels in America" is essentially about betrayal and how the heart learns or doesn't learn to live with loss. Louis, unable to deal with illness, abandons his lover, Prior, who has AIDS; Joe, an ambitious bisexual Mormon Republican legal clerk, abandons his dippy pill-popping wife, Harper; and the rapacious Roy Cohn abandons everybody. Within these crude parameters, Kushner has made something magical and mysterious which honors the gay community by telling a story that sets its concerns in the larger historical context of American political life. The vehicle for this thematic crossover is the hectoring, unscrupulous right-wing lawyer Roy Cohn. ("Roy Cohn is a heterosexual man, Henry, who fucks around with guys," he tells the doctor who has made the diagnosis of AIDS.) As written, Cohn is one of the great evil characters of modern American drama. In him Kushner personifies the barbarity of individualism during the Reagan years, and also the deep strain of pessimism that goes with the territory. "Love; that's a trap. Responsibility; that's a trap, too," Cohn tells Joe, whom he sees as a potential "Royboy" to pull strings for him in the Justice Department. "Life is full of horror; nobody escapes, nobody; save yourself." In transferring his incandescent performance as Cohn from California to New York, Ron Leibman has become almost Jacobean in the snarling, vigorous excess of his performance. It's a choice that is lapped up by the audience but is lamentable for the play. "Perestroika," the second part of the saga, which centers largely on Cohn's story, is scheduled to join "Millennium Approaches" in October. By then, with any luck, both the story line and Leibman's emotional progression will have found their proper equipoise.

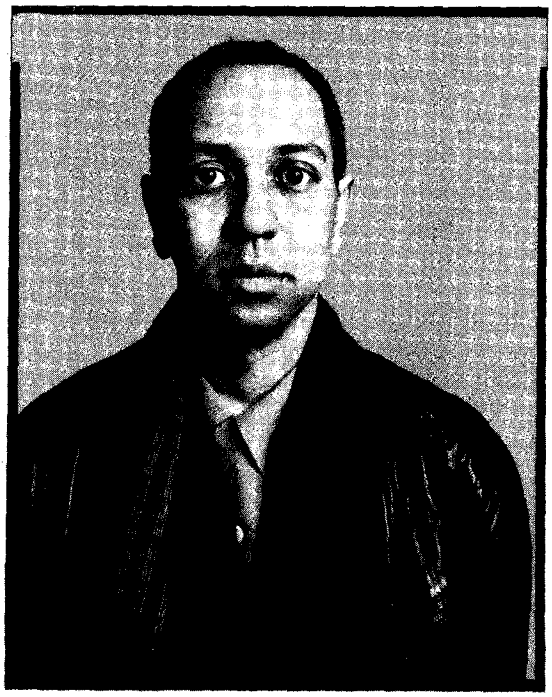
Otherwise, Wolfe's production is elegant and understated. Wolfe, who believes that the greatest show on earth is the sight of human beings exhibiting their feelings, has downplayed the fantastical and concentrated his considerable theatrical imagination on making every emotional moment clear and compelling. (On the two nights I visited the play, the audience rose en masse at the finale to give it a standing ovation.) Wolfe's greatest contribution to the evening is the unshowy but fine filigree work on the performances of Stephen Spinella, as the dying Prior, and Joe Mantello, as the anguished and droll Louis—performances that have grown stronger, clearer, and more subtle in the move to Broadway. Wolfe has also added David Marshall Grant as Joe, Marcia Gay Harden as Harper, and Jeffrey Wright as the retired drag queen Belize, all of whom bring a rich felt life to paradoxical personalities and keep the moral stakes of the drama high. Wolfe, who takes over as producer at the Public Theatre after this production, sees Kushner's play as a kind of watershed. "If we wanted to know what America was becoming, we used to look at the center—that which was constituted as normal, American, Protestant, and white," he told me. "Now, if we want to know where America is and where it's going, we need to look at the fringe. The fringe is now the center. This play, which is gay in subject matter and theme, is about America, about justice, about decency, and about heart. A friend of mine has a good line—'If they're running you out of town, get in front and pretend it's a parade.' Well, now the people who were being run out of town are saying, 'We're the parade. And we're not going anywhere. So deal.' " But neither Wolfe nor Kushner practices the polemic he preaches. Instead of imposing personality on ideas, the production lets ideas emerge through Kushner's careful observation of personality.

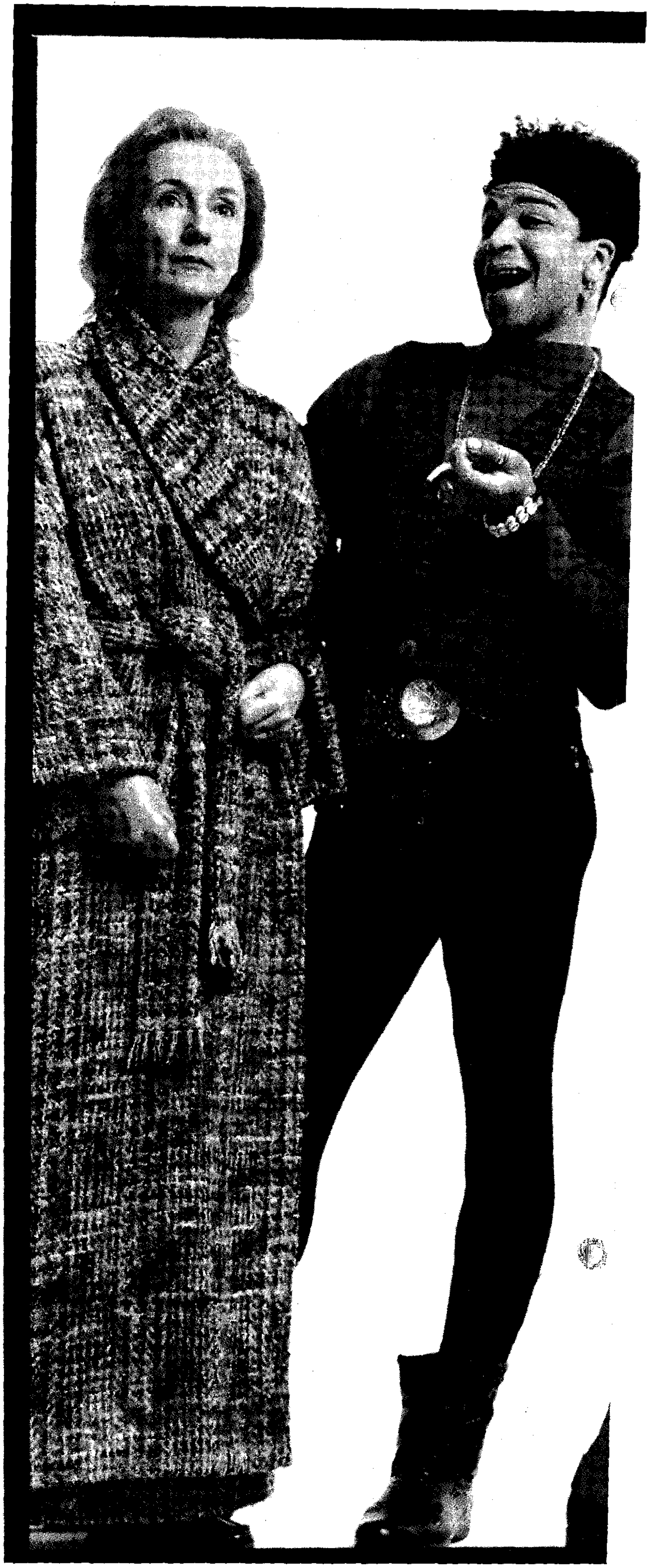
At the beginning of "Angels in America," a rabbi speaks over the coffin of one Sarah Ironson, who came from the shtetl to the Bronx. "You can never make that crossing that she made," he says to us. "For such Great Voyages in this world do not any more exist." But they do. Kushner has made one, and through the blessings of his great gifts of humor and empathy so do we. He brings us news of that most beautiful, divided, and unexplored country—the human heart. ♦

PORTFOLIO

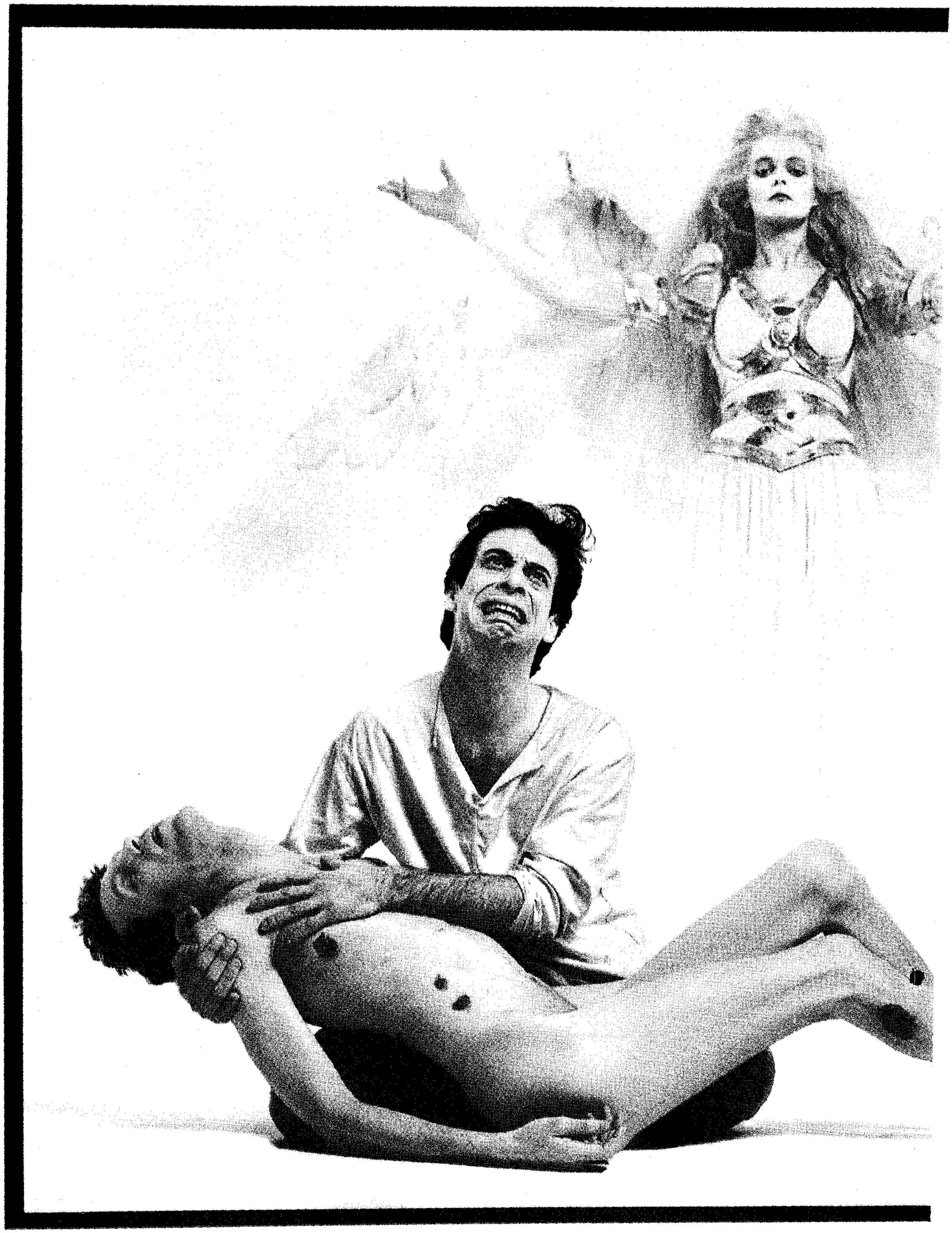
THE FACES OF ANGELS

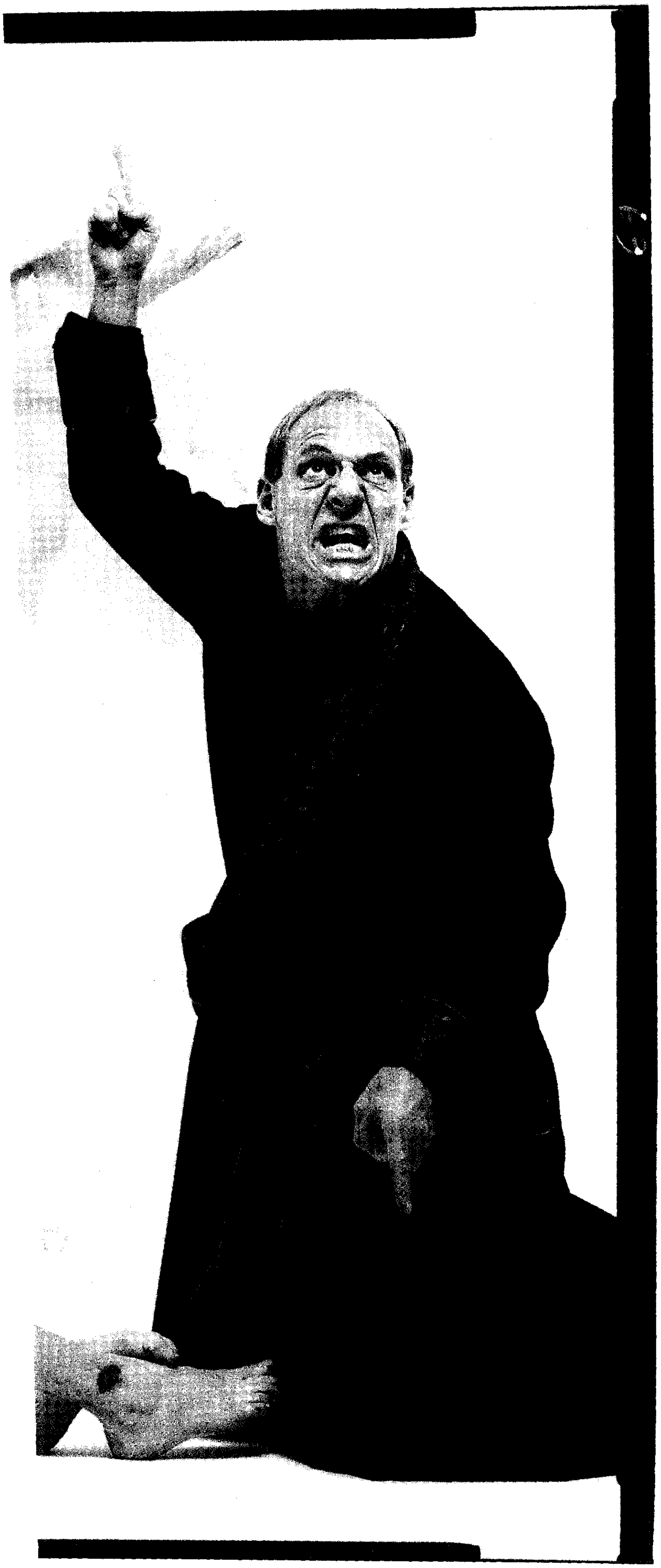
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

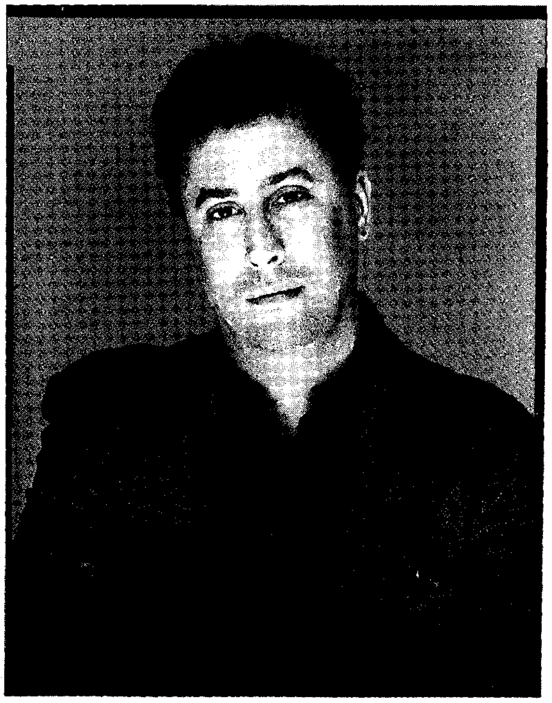




Above: George C. Wolfe; opposite, left to right: Kathleen Chalfant (Hannah Pitt), Jeffrey Wright (Belize), David Marshall Grant (Joe Pitt), Marcia Gay Harden (Harper Pitt), and Stephen Spinella (Prior Walter).







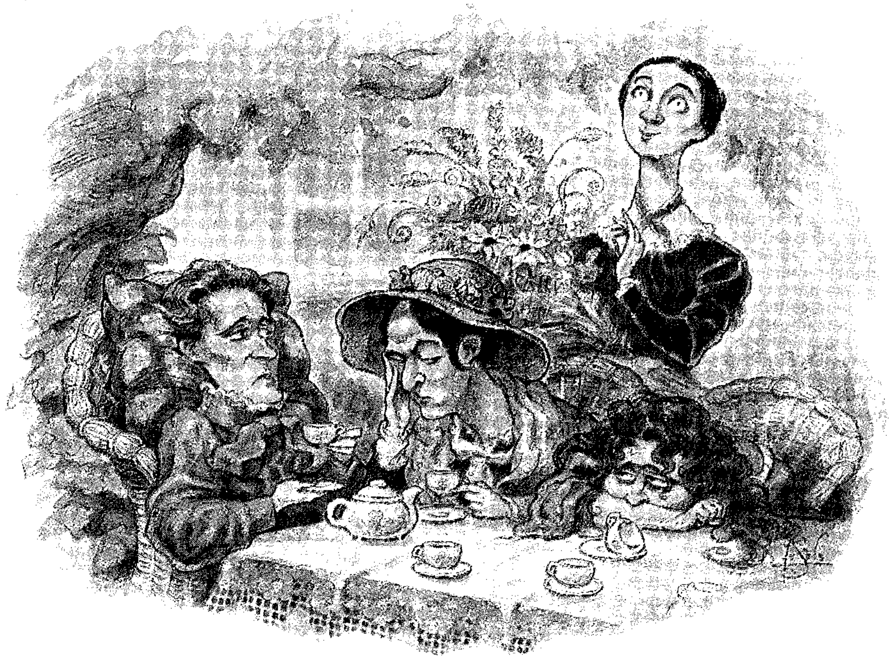
Opposite, left to right: Stephen Spinella (Prior Walter), Joe Mantello (Louis Ironson), Ellen McLaughlin (The Angel), and Ron Leibman (Roy Cohn); above: Tony Kushner.

SCENES FROM A NEW PLAY

ALICE IN BED

BY SUSAN SONTAG

SUPPOSE Shakespeare had a sister, a brilliant sister, a sister with a writing gift as immense as her brother's. That's what Virginia Woolf asks us to imagine in her epochal polemic "A Room of One's Own." Is it likely that Judith Shakespeare—the name Woolf imagines for her—would have found the inner authority that could have made her a playwright? Or, as is more likely, would her gift have remained silent? Silent not merely for want of encouragement. Silent because of the way that women are defined and therefore, commonly, define themselves. For the obligation to be physically attractive and patient and nurturing and docile and sensitive and deferential to fathers (to brothers, to husbands) contradicts and *must* collide with the egocentricity and aggressiveness and the indifference to self that a large creative gift requires in order to flourish.



PETER DE SÈVE

Shakespeare, as far as we know, did not have a sister. But the greatest American novelist, Henry James, whose brother was the greatest American psychologist and moral philosopher, William James, had a sister, a brilliant sister, and we know what she became. The waters of depression closed over her head when she was nineteen, she tried to summon the courage to commit suicide, she suffered from a variety of vague and debilitating ailments, she went abroad, she stayed in bed, she started a diary, she died . . . at forty-three.

So "Alice in Bed" is a play about women, about women's anguish and women's consciousness of self: a free fantasy based on a real person, Alice James, the youngest of five children (and only daughter) of an extraordinarily distinguished nineteenth-century American family. The father, heir to a large business fortune, was a well-known author on religious and moral subjects. An eccentric and strong-willed man, who had lost a leg in an accident at thirteen, he was his children's principal tutor, and took them on several trips to Europe when they were young. (Not surprisingly, the mother was a mild, retiring person who had little influence on the life of the family.) When Alice James was thirty, she made her desire to commit suicide known to her father, who, after a solemn lecture, granted his permission. In 1884, she moved to England, where her brother Henry (Harry) had settled, and lived there, bedridden, until her death from breast cancer seven and a half years later.

Perhaps nothing about a person is more potent, and also more arbitrary, than the person's name.

The name of my historical character, Alice James, inevitably echoes the nineteenth century's most famous Alice, the heroine of Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." The all too common reality of a woman who does not know what to do with her genius, her originality, her aggressiveness, and therefore becomes a career invalid, merged in my mind with the fictional figure of the Victorian girl-child who discovers the world of adult arbitrariness in the form of a dream (in the style produced by that perfectly legal and widely used nineteenth-century drug, opium), in which the changes in and perplexities about her feelings are imagined as arbitrary changes in physical size and scale.

And once Alice James, my Alice James, had fused with Alice of Alice-in-Wonderland, I knew I could have a scene inspired by (though quite different from) the most famous chapter of Lewis Carroll's book, "A Mad Tea-Party."

At my mad tea party I have convened, for the purpose of advising and consoling Alice, the ghosts of two nineteenth-century American writers. One, Emily Dickinson, was a genius—who dealt with her searing originality by spending her life as a reclusive spinster, keeping house for her family; of Dickinson's more than seventeen hundred poems, fewer than a dozen were published in her lifetime.

Margaret Fuller, the other writer summoned to the tea party from beyond the grave, is the first important American woman of letters—she wrote a study of Goethe and a notorious proto-feminist book, "Woman in the Nineteenth Century." She drowned with her young Italian husband and their baby, when the ship bringing her back to America from Italy, where she had lived for some years, foundered in a storm a hundred yards or so off Fire Island.

I have also convened at my tea party two exemplary angry women from the nineteenth-century stage: Myrtha, the Queen of the Wilis, a company of ghosts of young women who, betrayed in love, have died before their wedding day, from Act II of "Giselle"; and from "Parsifal," my Dormouse: Kundry, the bitter, guilt-ridden woman who wants to sleep.

After the crowded tea party, a monologue. Alice, in her mind, must go to Rome—which her brother Harry often visited and where Margaret Fuller lived. And there she will imagine not only her freedom but the weight of the past and the distressing claims of the world beyond the privileged one in which she lives, represented by the figure of the child with a maimed hand. . . .

All is fiction, of course, in my play. Much is invented.

I wrote "Alice in Bed" in two weeks in January, 1990, but I first dreamed it from beginning to end ten years earlier, in Rome, while rehearsing the production I directed of a late play by Pirandello, "As You Desire Me"—another play about a woman in despair who is, or is pretending to be, helpless.

I think I have been preparing to write "Alice in Bed" all my life.

A play, then, about the grief and anger of women; and, finally, a play about the imagination.

The reality of the mental prison. The triumphs of the imagination.

But the victories of the imagination are not enough.

CHARACTERS:
Alice James
Margaret Fuller
Emily Dickinson
Kundry
Alice's mother
Myrtha, Queen of the Wilis

MATTRESS TEAM:
M 1 (man)
M 2 (woman)

TIME: 1890
PLACE: London

VERANDA or sunroom. Large treelike plant. Long table with full white tablecloth, teapot, tray, cups and saucers. White-painted wicker chairs grouped at one end of the table. MARGARET *in one of the chairs, holding a cup and saucer, reading. She has on a hat and is robust, homely, appealing. In another chair* KUNDRY, *head down, asleep.* EMILY*—frail, in a shift—enters.*

EMILY: Margaret. Don't get up.

MARGARET: Are we early.

EMILY: Tenderness is always timely.

MARGARET: I think I'm early. Perhaps you are punctual.

EMILY: Waiting is a long hello.

MARGARET: She should drink lemon tea. Mine is with milk. Am I supposed to offer you something. But I do not consider myself the hostess.

EMILY (*looking at* KUNDRY): Will she wake up.

MARGARET: It depends on us. On the need.

EMILY: I'd like there to be others.

MARGARET: I mean to be of help. I think I *can* be helpful.

EMILY: The need is like a flower, and I have prepared my flower smile.

(MARGARET, *sipping her tea, has put the book on her knee. It falls to the floor;* EMILY *leans over and returns it to her.*)

MARGARET: Grazie.

EMILY: Who else then.

MARGARET: Why do you want there to be others. I should think we're more than enough.

EMILY: I shall always defer to you.

MARGARET: Oh please. Don't tell me that you find me intimidating.

EMILY: Yes. But what pleasure I get from defying my fears!

MARGARET: Our fears our griefs are not the point here as far as I understand.

(ALICE *is carried in by* M 1 *and* M 2.)

MARGARET: Ah. Here's our girl.

(ALICE *is set down in her chair at the end of the table; her legs are covered with a paisley shawl.* MARGARET *draws her chair closer.*)

MARGARET: Alice, Emily was saying she found it intimidating to be alone with me. Don't you hate it when someone says that to you?

ALICE: I'm sure Emily meant it as a compliment.

EMILY: I didn't say it. I admitted it. Which is another season.

MARGARET (*to* ALICE): Don't you cringe when someone says that to you?

ALICE: What a beautiful day. It would be preposterous for anyone to say such a thing to me.

MARGARET: Nonsense. Of course it has been said to and of you. You're ambushed. Either you take it as a compliment, and then you're straddling your flatterer whether you want to or not. Or you start reassuring, grovelling really, to put the other at ease. (EMILY *moves toward the door.*) Emily where are you going.

ALICE: Emily.

EMILY: I brought flowers. I did bring them. Wait. (*She exits.*)

MARGARET: Do you think I offended her. I'm truly sorry. Sometimes I have acted on a strong impulse and could not analyze what passed in my mind. I acted what was in my character. It is a terrible world. It was hard to be a woman known, among other attributes, for her homeliness.

ALICE: You may complain to me. Do.

MARGARET: I'm sorry if I offended her.

ALICE: She'll return, she promised. Let's take this moment alone. I do admire that you had the courage to live to write to be enthusiastic, to walk about the world. I do admire you.

MARGARET: I was an embarrassment to others. And then to the relief of many I died.

ALICE: I'm an embarrassment to myself. (*Laughs.*) And you wanted to live. Look what it took to subdue you. Those were mighty waters. (MARGARET *sighs.*) I'm sorry. I don't mean to remind you so lightheartedly. I think about death so much, death is such a familiar consoling thought, I forget how weighty it is when you're out in the world. (*Pauses.*) I live so lightly I need to be held down.

MARGARET: It was a terrible ending. I tried to save my baby. We drowned within a hundred yards of the land.

ALICE: Forgive me. I shouldn't make personal remarks.

MARGARET: I do, whenever I can. (*She looks at* KUNDRY.) I do think it's rude of her to go on sleeping. But I'm trying to sympathize.

ALICE: Let's not wake her. Two is my favorite size for a party. And let's not be sad. I want to arrive at a more buoyant conclusion.

MARGARET: Would you like some tea. I think I am the only one here with any manners.

ALICE: Lemon tea.

MARGARET: I knew that's what you would ask for. I said to Emily that while I prefer tea with milk you would—(*Looks in teapot.*) But there isn't any and I shouldn't have offered because I am not and do not want to be the hostess.

(KUNDRY *raises her head—she is disheveled, has wild hair, etc.—and speaks as if still sleeping.*)

KUNDRY: You might as well say I sleep because I am suffering as that I am suffering because I am asleep.

ALICE: Kundry.

KUNDRY: Who has called.

ALICE: No one who means you harm.

KUNDRY: Why have I been awakened. I want to sleep. (*She lays her head down again on the table; sleeps.*)

Margaret: I don't mean to frustrate you.

Alice: What.

Margaret: The tea. I wish there were tea. But I think it is not for me to regret or to provide. Then shall we have a pipe.

Alice: Yes. Yes. Exactly what I was thinking. (*Rings bell.* M 1 *and* M 2 *wheel in a dozen or so mattresses and a tray-table with paraphernalia for smoking opium: two large hookahs, etc. Faint "Parsifal" music from offstage.*) Let's not wait for Emily. Are we being naughty. I don't think this particular pleasure would be good for Emily. (*They laugh.*) Most imprudent. (Alice *leans toward* Margaret, *then pulls away abruptly.*) Oh I think I am siding with mediocrity. I am betraying her or myself or someone. Oh. Is this whom I want to talk to.

Margaret: Yes. Me. (M 1 *and* M 2 *have set two stacks of three mattresses on the floor, keeping the rest to the side.*) It does not I think require genius to live.

Alice (*still agitated*): I am betraying myself.

Margaret (*dryly*): How inconvenient to be two people. The possibility of betrayal does in that case I fear suggest itself. (*She pauses, looks at* Alice *expectantly.*)

Alice (*suddenly relaxing*): You are right of course. I am taking myself much too seriously. Oh. (*Laughs.*) I'm still two am I not. I'm afraid I have never been gifted for having or even attending a party.

(M 2 *drops something, making a loud noise.*)

Kundry (*raising her head, eyes closed*): Why have I been awakened.

(Margaret *taps* Kundry *on the shoulder, looks at* Alice, *shakes her head.*)

Margaret: Oh *this* lost soul.

Alice: From my limited experience of parties—

Margaret: Don't denigrate yourself. The first rule.

Alice: I was going to say that I'm not prepared to say she's being rude. I'm so sorry for her.

Margaret: She will eventually find us interesting I wager.

(M 1 *and* M 2 *install* Margaret *and* Alice *on the mattresses with their hookahs. Music up. Lights lower.*)

Alice: I do love lying down don't you.

Margaret (*languid voice*): I was very active. (*Inhales.*) But now I'm not myself.

Alice (*laughs*): You see. You too. Two of you. It's always like that when you think.

Margaret (*dreamily*): Not myself. I'm adapting to my environment.

Alice (*sighing*): I've never seen Rome. And now I never shall.

Margaret: It's just as you imagine. That beautiful. Are you imagining it.

Alice: I suppose you are against suicide.

Margaret: Never seen the point. We die too soon anyway.

Alice (*sitting up*): We've abandoned Kundry too. Who I'm sure would be more comfortable lying down with us.

Margaret: Even Kundry you will note does not kill herself.

(Alice *settles back on the mattress; inhales smoke.*)

Alice: I wanted advice. From a woman I could respect. I've always sought advice from men.

Margaret: People were always giving me advice, for my own good. Truth was, they did not want me to embarrass them.

Alice: Exactly. (*They laugh.*) I don't have a sister.

Margaret: Women despair differently. I've observed that. We can be very stoical.

Alice: I don't know whether to feel more or less. (*She sits, refills hookah.*) I'm at a turning. (*Inhales.*) Do you think Emily will return. Do you think Kundry will wake up. I realize I rather liked the idea of a party. Feeling less perhaps.

Margaret: Thinking doesn't help? I always found it helped.

Alice: Thinking.

Margaret: Unhappiness may be only a mistake. A mental mistake, that you could still undo.

Alice: Retrace my steps. Oh. But I can't walk. (*Becoming agitated.*) You see I can't walk. (*Knocks over her hookah.*) I'm feeling very strange. Is it this? Don't *you* feel strange.

(*Sound of waves.*)

Margaret: I'm not susceptible. Wish I were. (*Sighs.*) But I'm too practical. (*Stands.*) Always have my feet on the ground. (*Laughs.*) When they're not in the water.

Alice: I have to be calm. Help me.

Margaret: Good. You're becoming excited.

Alice: I must be calm. When I crossed the Atlantic it was November. The sea was calm. But I never left my cabin. Shortly after the ship sailed I had what Father called one of my nervous attacks. I never left my cabin. Miss Loring was with me. Harry met the boat at Liverpool. Two stout sailors carried me ashore and I spent a week recuperating in a Liverpool hotel, attended by a maid Harry had brought and a nurse and Miss Loring. Then Harry took me to London and installed me in lodgings near Piccadilly near his own rooms.

Margaret: You crossed the Atlantic and never left your cabin?

Alice: Recumbent.

Margaret: The sea was, there was no, the sea—

Alice: Calm.

Margaret: You didn't want to see anything.

Alice: Don't reproach me.

(*Light change.* Emily *enters with flowers. She distributes them.*)

Alice: You left us Emily. We waited for you. That doesn't seem fair.

Emily: The pain deserved a blank.

Alice: I did think this was a party you were giving for me. And so I thought no doubt mistakenly that I could count on a minimum of—(*She sees* Emily *at the table reaching for the teapot.*) You know there isn't any tea.

(Emily *pours herself tea, stands sipping it.*)

Margaret (*to* Alice): I'm beginning to worry about you. Truly worry.

Alice: What do you mean.

(Emily *sits demurely on a mattress.*)

Margaret: I do question the need, I suppose I mean the wisdom, but of course it's in the end a matter of common sense, when, by asking Emily as well, you—

Alice: What have you got against Emily, Margaret. (*To* Emily.) You don't mind if I ask Margaret to say what she means.

Emily: No.

Alice: Be blunt.

Margaret: I always am. But now I wonder—

Alice: No please.

Emily: Yes.

Margaret (*after a pause*): You're not I think giving life a chance.

Alice: Because I invited Emily.

Emily: One can't think about death

steadily any more than one can stare at the sun. I think about it slant.

MARGARET: You like that tone don't you.

ALICE (*to* MARGARET): I suppose I do. (*To* EMILY.) I think your interest in death is more interesting than mine.

MARGARET: I thought we were here to talk about life.

EMILY: Death is the lining. The lines.

ALICE: I remember when my mother died— (MOTHER *enters; all in white. White full coat, carries white umbrella, wears white gloves.*) Oh my god. I didn't invite her. I never invited her.

(MOTHER *moves toward table.*)

MARGARET: Alice.

EMILY: Alice.

KUNDRY (*lifts head, eyes closed*): Who called.

ALICE (*air of terror*): She'll stay and then we can't talk.

MARGARET: You can talk. (*Moves to stand protectively near* ALICE.)

EMILY: You are talking.

ALICE: I'm going to pretend that I don't mind. Then perhaps she'll go away.

MOTHER: Oh your poor mother.

(*Stands behind chair next to* KUNDRY, *whose head rests on the table.*)

ALICE (*whispering*): It's my mother. She's dead too.

MARGARET: You didn't invite her.

ALICE (*whispering*): Certainly not. (*Pauses.*) Mother.

MOTHER: Oh your poor mother.

ALICE: Sit down Mother. (*Whispering, to* MARGARET *and* EMILY.) I have to invite her now. It would be rude not to.

MOTHER: I can't say I'm observing it but I'm not ignoring it either.

MARGARET (*loud whisper*): What's she talking about.

ALICE: Me. I suppose. (*To* MOTHER.) Sit down please. (*To* MARGARET *and* EMILY.) You see. I don't mean anything I say. (*Pauses.*) She was always out of range.

(MOTHER *attempts to sit. Crowds* KUNDRY, *who whimpers, flails about; won't let her sit.*)

KUNDRY: What day is it. What year is it. How dare she.

MARGARET: Couldn't you just turn it upside down. Throw it down a hole. Tip it sideways. And let all those hard griefs slither away like curds turned out of their dish.

MOTHER: I can't say I'm walking but I'm not limping either. (*She has stopped*

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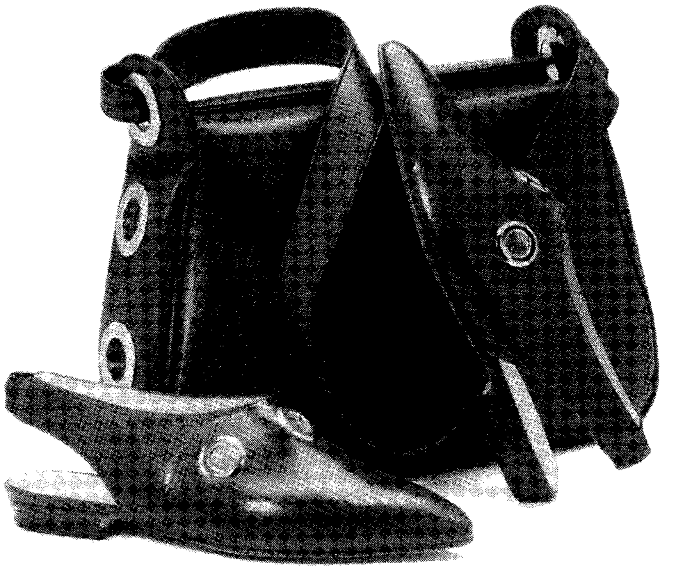

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FRATELLI ROSSETTI

trying to wrest a chair from KUNDRY. *Opens umbrella. Looks up.*)

KUNDRY: At this table there's no room.

MOTHER: I never insisted.

(MOTHER *exits.*)

KUNDRY (*eyes still shut*): I think Kundry has saved you. (*Rocks back and forth.*)

MARGARET: A chastening apparition.

ALICE: I remember when my mother died my youngest brother said that we have all been educated by Father to feel that death was the only reality and that life was simply an experimental thing.

MARGARET: An experiment. An experiment. An experiment.

ALICE: Are you making fun of me.

(MARGARET *sighs, shakes her head.*)

KUNDRY (*still rocking*): It is hard to save anyone. But that is all we desire.

ALICE: He said, my brother said, that we feel that we are more near to her now than ever before, simply because she is already at the goal to which we all cheerfully bend our steps.

EMILY: Cheerfully is a lovely, lethal word.

ALICE: He said, my youngest brother said, after our mother died: "The last two weeks have been the happiest I have known." (*Looks at* MARGARET *and* EMILY, *then starts to laugh.*) Yes it is mad isn't it. But you see how difficult it was for us. Father had high standards. We were not supposed to be, well, like the others.

MARGARET: Lived. Lived. Lived. Yes I lived, and yes I did not find it so difficult. I went out on the deck. Nothing could have made me renounce standing on the deck, feeling the wind on my face, pushing through my clothes.

EMILY: I've never been on a boat.

KUNDRY (*still rocking*): My horse. My legs.

MARGARET (*to* EMILY, *in a kindly tone*): I know this can't mean much to *you*. But I think, at least I said, I did say— They have not lived who have not seen Rome.

ALICE: Ah travel.

KUNDRY (*rocking*): The Pope. He can bless, but can he save, but can he damn. No.

EMILY: It's a question of scale. To me it was an adventure to cross the village lane.

(MYRTHA *enters. Long white dress, chiffon veil, baby wings, headband with flowers, etc. A kind of dervish twirling step. Music from "Giselle."*)

ALICE: Did I invite her. Who is it. It's not— Ah Myrtha. Come and join us.

(MYRTHA *stops.*)

ALICE: What's wrong.

MYRTHA: I'd rather not lie down.

MARGARET: No one will force you.

ALICE: Do you want to stand.

MYRTHA: Actually I'm not supposed to lie down. (*Resumes twirling.*) In the forest. In the glade. I live in the forest. That's where the graves are. He brings flowers. (*Stops again.*) What beautiful flowers.

MARGARET: We were talking about unhappiness. (*Sits at the table, opposite* KUNDRY.)

MYRTHA (*to* ALICE): I think there is a man who has broken your heart.

ALICE: My father perhaps.

MYRTHA: We could kill him. Then you would have to kill yourself. Beautiful flowers. (*Resumes twirling.*)

ALICE: I always thought a man would crush me. He would put a pillow over my face. I wanted a man's weight on my body. But then I couldn't move.

(EMILY *stands, helps* ALICE *to stand;* MARGARET *leaves table to help. Together they bring* ALICE *to her seat at the table.*)

MARGARET: I can understand your not wanting it. Of course you feel pinned down. It's good. And then you get up afterward.

(M 1 *and* M 2 *have entered.* M 1 *sets a pot of tea on the table.*)

MYRTHA: He can't atone. You shouldn't forgive him.

(M 1 *and* M 2 *gather up and remove most of the mattresses and the hookahs.*)

ALICE: I remember a young man, Julian, he was a music student, a friend of my brother, of Harry I mean. He and Harry were always together. But he liked me. I used to imagine that we could go swimming together. I used to imagine his body.

MYRTHA: Flowers. Revenge.

EMILY: It's a winsome longing.

MARGARET: My idea is this. Want what you are capable of, and what you are capable of wanting, and be *completely* clear on the matter, and live according to it.

ALICE: Life is not just a question of courage.

MARGARET: But it is.

EMILY (*to* ALICE): I think you are quite brave.

MYRTHA: How can you stand to be inside. In a room.

ALICE: You don't know the fearful things I see when I close my eyes. I have to die so I don't see the monstrous things.

MARGARET: I see terrible things when I open my eyes.

MYRTHA: In a room. In a tomb.

KUNDRY (*to* ALICE, *reaching convulsively across the table*): Give me your hand.

ALICE: What do you see?

(*Extends her hand.* KUNDRY *takes it, brings it to her forehead, kisses it, then flings it back.*)

KUNDRY: Kundry's visions are the most terrible. Most terrible. I must be punished. My body wants—but I don't. It wants, it's so big, I can't, I don't want, he wants, he makes me, but I want to, I want to first . . . (*Starting to fall asleep*) First I'll want, if they let me, when I don't feel . . .

ALICE: Poor soul.

KUNDRY (*waking again*): Why have I been awakened. I want to sleep.

ALICE: Please don't become, well . . . crazed. We mean you no harm. We have the most sisterly respect for your suffering.

MARGARET: However retrograde.

EMILY: I trust that my flowers have the good grace to be seared by our shouts.

KUNDRY: Why did you wake me.

ALICE: I told you.

(KUNDRY *stares uncomprehendingly.*)

MARGARET: She told you. But there may have been a mistake.

ALICE: Please don't be angry. You needn't have come if you really didn't want to.

EMILY: It wasn't an order, that's what she's saying. But it was a wind.

KUNDRY: Oh, oh.

MARGARET: There's a mattress. Lie down.

ALICE: Do you want anything to drink or eat. We did not offer before because we thought you preferred—

(KUNDRY *is very agitated.* MARGARET *and* EMILY *help her lie down on a mattress.*)

EMILY: Let her sleep.

MARGARET: Here. Some tea.

(KUNDRY *groans, refuses the tea.*)

ALICE: I was, we are, wrong to have disturbed her.

KUNDRY: Sleep, sleep . . .

(*She sleeps, or seems to.*)

MARGARET: She'll be of no more use now.

EMILY: Shhhh . . .

MARGARET: Is this sleep different from when she was at the table. I don't see why we have to whisper. It's not I think that she sleeps so soundly.

ALICE: Yes she wakes when she wants to.

MYRTHA: I like being aware. (*Picks up sheaf of flowers and dances with them.*)

KUNDRY (*opening her eyes*): There's an answer. Which is . . . (*Her eyes start to close; she makes an effort.*) There's a question.

ALICE: We've decided to ask you straight out why you sleep.

KUNDRY: Because my body is heavy. The innocent boy came and I tried to corrupt him. To make him desire me. He did desire me, but more as a mother than as a lover. And, still, he resisted me. So I felt ashamed. I fell down a bottomless well of shame. I'm still falling. How tiring. Oblivion.

MYRTHA: Exact your revenge. Men making women into whores and angels, how can you believe that. Have you no self-respect.

MARGARET: My husband was a boy and, unlike me, an exceedingly delicate person. I felt safe with him. And we had a child. I think he would have proved an excellent father, though he could not speculate about it, or indeed about anything.

EMILY: I stayed home and wrote. My brother fornicated. I was in a room with blue trim. I could see an orchard from my window. He came in, he had a goatee. Death. The frogs were singing. They have such pretty lazy times. How nice to be a frog! When the best is gone I know that other things are not of consequence. The heart wants what it wants or else it does not care.

KUNDRY: I'm still falling. And I am not allowed to the end.

EMILY: One would prefer to look behind at a pain than to see it coming.

KUNDRY: Sleep . . .

ALICE: Is she sleeping.

EMILY: The day begins whenever it can.

MYRTHA: It's as if she were drugged. We could make her stand. (*Lifts teapot, as if to douse* KUNDRY.)

ALICE: Oh be careful.

EMILY: We could comb out the knots in her hair.

MARGARET: She isn't sleeping, she's hiding.

(MARGARET *and* EMILY, *after pulling the reluctant* MYRTHA *down with them, to help, kneel around* KUNDRY, *arranging her arms, straightening her legs.*)

MYRTHA (*to* ALICE): Doesn't she make you want to race about. Not even a little bit. (*Stands. Begins doing warm-up exercises, using the table edge as a barre.*)

MARGARET: Yes!

MYRTHA: You see Alice, Margaret and I agree. (*Pauses.*) Come. (*Holds out her hand to* ALICE.)

ALICE (*irritably*): I fail to see what Kundry's preference for the lying position has to do with my own.

MYRTHA: We're talking about helplessness. We're invoking revolt.

EMILY: An ill heart, like a body, has its more comfortable days as well as its days of pain.

ALICE: Is this your advice. But that's what everyone says. They tell me to get up. Get up they say. (*Pauses.*) Or they've stopped telling me to get up because they still want me to, but they've given up thinking I ever will.

MYRTHA: When we say it it's different.

ALICE: It's still the same answer. I'm disappointed.

EMILY: Orders fall, questions rise.

MARGARET: Shall we take a vote.

ALICE: You do make me laugh all of you. I know someone is trying to be logical.

MYRTHA: Just move, you'll discover. The strength you don't know.

(MYRTHA *resumes twirling very slowly.* EMILY *still sits beside* KUNDRY, *stroking her hair.* MARGARET *retrieves her book.*)

ALICE: You're asking me to dance.

EMILY: You are moving. But the velocity of the ill is that of the snail.

(KUNDRY *opens her eyes, partly sits up.*)

KUNDRY: It's a cycle. Dejection Revolt Sleep Reconciliation.

MYRTHA: A circle. Just move.

MARGARET: It's a council. We're here to advise you.

ALICE: Advice. It's enough if you console me. If you kindle my imagination. Draw close. (*Sees them hesitating.*) But don't think I'm jealous of your attentions to Kundry. Closer. Whisper to me. Tell me what you know. I feel so small.

EMILY: What I know is so small. . . .

MYRTHA: I wish I could stay. . . .

MARGARET: You already know what you want to know. . . .

KUNDRY: Sleep. . . .

(MYRTHA *leaves.*)

ALICE: Oh stay. (*Turns to the others.*) I disappointed her.

(M 1 *and* M 2 *come in with a stretcher and take* KUNDRY *away on it.*)

MARGARET: I'm going to see Emily part of the way back. Opposites attract.

ALICE: And who am I the opposite of. Don't be disappointed with me.

MARGARET: We'll come again.

EMILY: We'll write to each other.

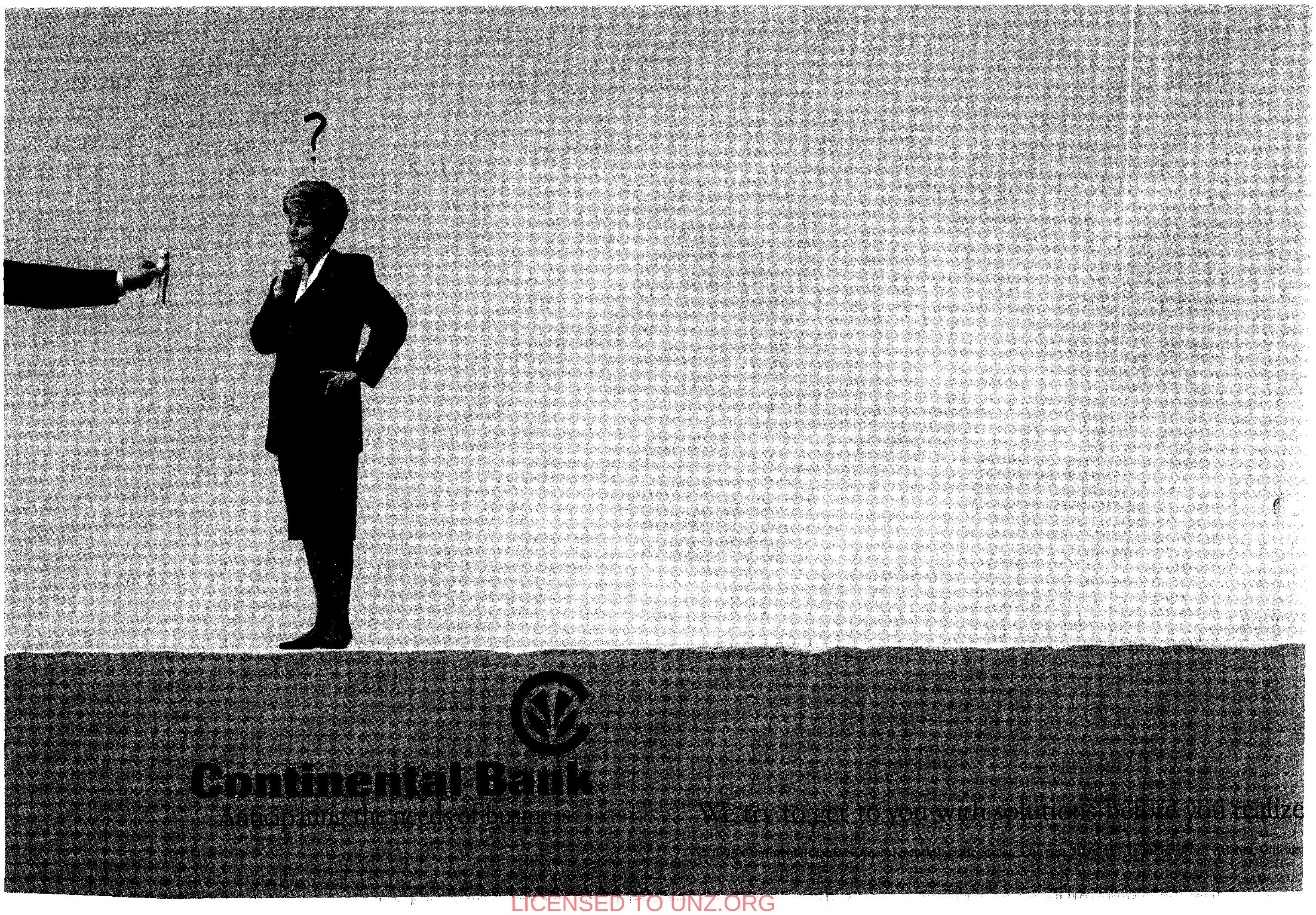
ALICE: I'll be here. In my place. (*Laughs.*) You know where to find me. Oh Margaret when I think of all the places you've been. And I stay in my lair. I'd wanted to ask you about Rome. About the layers. And the shock. Just a few more minutes. Emily won't be bored. (*Lights are dimming.*) Emily. Margaret.

(*Blackout.*)

ALICE, *in portion of bedroom magnified so she seems very small. Sitting on a child's chair, stage front. Only half the giant bed, with a gigantic red pillow, is visible behind her.*

ALICE: My mind. I can travel with my mind. With my mind I'm in Rome, where Margaret lived. Where Harry descended. I've put aside their books. My turn now. I walk on the streets. That's the power of a mind. I see the washerwomen. The palaces. I smell the garlic. Orange peels in the gutter. I hear the bells of the nearby convent. People are bawling and gesturing, trying to sell you things. Children beg, mothers with children beg. They're professionals, I suppose. Carriages go smashing past me. Not smashing, I meant to say rumbling. I'd watch the excavations. There's still so much more to dig up. Ruins are beautiful I think. They're so—speaking. Don't you think. And the marvellous sunsets, burnishing the ocher walls. I'd see that too, I do see it. Monuments. In my mind. It's supposed to be the most beautiful city in the world, although other people say Paris. And some say Venice, but Venice has too many odors, and Venice makes everyone think of death. But Rome makes you think of survival, and that thought would be in my mind when I'm in Rome. In my mind, in that beauty. If I did see all that beauty I know it would make me very happy. It would fill me. I would write about it in my diary, I would sketch it—yes, one more tourist recording her impressions. I would be very humble. Who am I, compared with

Rome. I come to see Rome, it doesn't come to see me. It can't move. (*Pauses.*) In my mind—here, in Rome—I know I would like Rome. I do like it, I'm thrilled by it, exalted when I travel there, in my mind. It's everything I imagine. But then I am only imagining, that's right. But that's a mind. The power of a mind. With my mind I can see, I can hold all that in my mind. Everyone says it's so beautiful. I've looked at the pictures, the engravings. Yes, Piranesi. I receive letters from people in Rome who tell me how happy they are. You know what I mean by people: foreigners. If I did see all that beauty I know it would make me very happy, but I don't know how I would separate from it. When would I have had enough. I would become so attached to Rome I would want to stay there forever. I would never have enough. I would walk on the streets and cross the squares and there would always be another street, another view. Perspectives, colonnades. The obelisks. And the cats, homeless, impudent. Shadows at night and the hot breeze. Harry told me about a girl who went to the Colosseum at night and caught pneumonia and died. It's dangerous to be alone—she wasn't, she went there with a man—but I like to think of being alone, in my mind I'm alone in Rome, even though it's a city where women are harassed when walking about alone, I can be alone there, quite invulnerable, altogether safe—in my mind, in Rome. Alone I loiter in the churches, crossing myself furtively. I want to cross myself, it feels right, but I don't want anyone to see me. How shocked Father would be. Wim not. (*Pauses.*) You see I am not Catholic of course—and my mind is, I dare flatter myself, relatively free of superstitions, including Popish ones. (*A dry laugh.*) Of course, I flatter myself. My mind must be chock-full of superstitions. Ones I don't even know about. The superstitions of this new time. With my mind I am hinged to the time I live in whether I like it or not. (*Pauses.*) It's the power of a mind to know that, too. It takes me quite past myself. I can be very big and see myself quite small, and it's still me; in my mind. In this new ugly time. It is ugly. Yes. I can't help feeling that, in my mind. Am I a snob in my mind, in Rome, like all those visiting Americans abasing themselves before Italians with titles. Am I nostalgic for another Rome, the one before this one, which is the only one I can know, if I were to go there, though I haven't. Do I, even when I come to Rome, a novice in these sympathies, ally myself with the past. Like Margaret and Harry, with their idyllic memories of a separate, Papal Rome. Irrevocably past. Perhaps. We are always looking for the past, especially when we travel. And I am in my mind, travelling, and the mind is the past, and the mind is Rome. And this time is in the mind, too. I will not fall into the gulf of history. I will cling to the side. Because I'm in my mind (*she starts to rock*), which is like a boat or a chair or a bed or a tree. Or a rope bridge. And in my mind I can be high up, too. There are vantage points in the mind, in the world. A panorama of roofs and domes, clear-cut against the Roman sky. I see that, from a hill, from my mind, though Rome is not a city one wants to see from afar, except in one's mind, like Aeneas. No not like Aeneas, he didn't really see anything, he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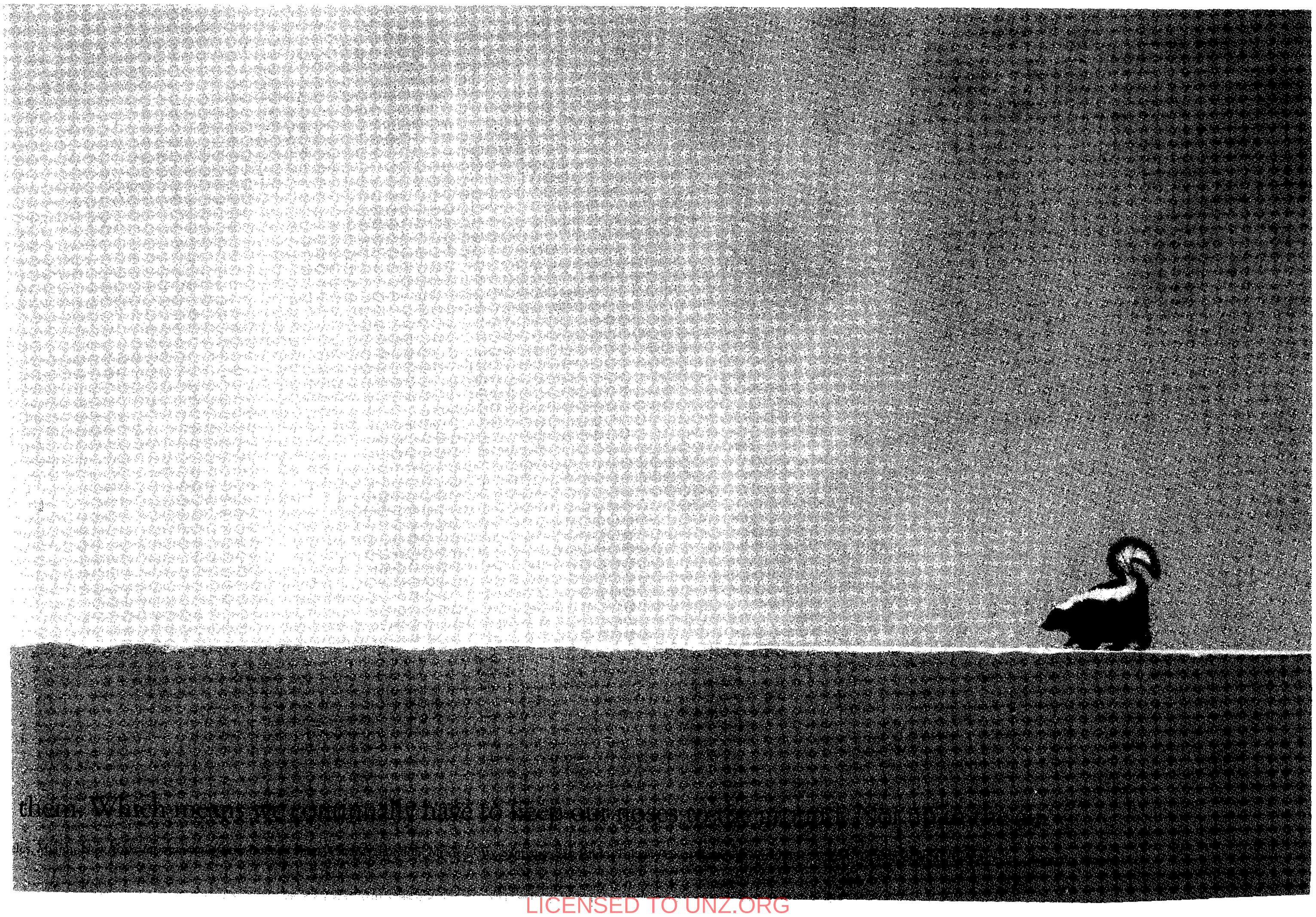
just plunged. Whereas I can have an overview, in my mind. Held in the beak of a bird, I'm flying over Rome, it rushes past me, the S of the Tiber, the hills, the fountains, and tiny carriages, drawn by brightly caparisoned toy horses, prancing over warm stones. In Rome, in my mind, there is a whole world underneath, subterranean chambers, lost foundations, dead rooms with floor-wide mosaics whose tiny cubes of color hiss in the darkness, cloaca maxima. In the mind. One can't see everything. But on the surface there's so much. In Rome wherever you turn there's another view, another stained wall, all that you don't see, the walls hung with silk, piano nobile, the hidden gardens, monsters of stone. So much stone; this stony lump in my breast. Broken stones, which means broken writing. The letters are all capitals. Their authors thought themselves very important, which is what makes you important: work of the mind. Who built, who made, who gave, who honored, who lies—almost always I can make out what it says. There is Latin in my mind, too, which Father put there, as he had put it in the minds of my brothers. He could not, he said, do less for me; for my mind. They made, they claimed, they died, they are still remembered. But remembered wrong, which is what remembering is. The views push on, one view translates into another, there are walls, doors, arches, terraces, another view, another change, but it's still the same place: Rome—in my mind. I can go as far as I want, I can do what I can't do, what I shouldn't do, in my mind. Something troubles me, I ache, an urchin is trailing me, curly hair, rags, sores on his arms, yellow mucus on his upper lip, he tugs at my skirt, he holds out his hand, if you give to one you should give to all is what the visitor is told, sagely. The child, there is something wrong with his thumb, he still holds out his hand, the child is in my mind too, the life I do not lead, the suffering I do not know, how can I, dare I, suffer not suffer for that. I pull away from the child or I give him everything I have or I give him one round warm coin, everything I do, in my mind, is wrong. And he vanishes, because I don't know what to do with him, for him, in my mind. Leaving an ache. And his twisted blackened little thumb, he's left his thumb in my mind. I keep moving, it is such a pleasure to move; in my mind. And when the church bells ring, it will be time, time for some people, better than consulting watches. But I don't go indoors, though all manner of invitations have been extended to me, perhaps only out of politeness, I stay outdoors, in my mind, in the sun, and I walk freely, my legs like stout stilts, I cross bridges, the river is shallow, I watch the low-flying black birds boiling above the bridges at sunset, the angel watches from the top of the angel's castle. I walk vigorously, dressed properly for whatever the weather is, it is not often a trial, not feeling in any way diminished by the grandeur of the spectacle, for the mind has its own swellings and diminishings, and who is to say what is the right size. Or the right age. How old am I. I won't say how old anything is. Rome is famous for being very old. I won't say how big or how small anything is. My mind doesn't have a size. One size fits all.

(*Slow fade.*) ♦



EVENINGS IN GOTHAM

MY OLD FLAME

Broadway's grand era, when theatregoing was a happy amenity, has long departed, but its voices and moments stick in mind.

BY ROGER ANGELL

I WAS not a theatre buff. I didn't save my ticket stubs or *Playbills;* once in a while, I went back to a terrific new play or musical for a second look, but not for a third or a fourth. I never yearned for invitations backstage. For one who grew up in New York and stayed on here, as I did, Broadway was part of the feast but not the main course. Family and friends, the daily papers, sports, books, home and school, teachers, girls, movies, the mayors, the harbor, the Museum of Natural History, Inwood Park, Madison Square Garden, the I.R.T. and the IND, winter ice skating, the radio, the Philharmonic, the Village, and the theatre: I knew them all but kept them in no particular order. Somehow, that was the whole point of the city: you took it all as it came, and went back for more the next day. The theatre was a little special, to be sure—once you had a couple of tickets, the date became a warm place up ahead on the calendar—but it is only lately that I have come to understand how deeply the New York stage suffused my mind and memory through my teens and twenties and thirties. Here, decades later, I am startled to find how much of it I have at hand, ready to flood over me at a moment's musing.

Without invitation, my mind's eye finds the creepy, dead-pale Eduardo Ciannelli, a dying gangster, unexpectedly there in a doorway in "Winterset," coughing as he delivers his whispered maledictions. Henry Travers finishes another folksy, conversational grace and then unfurls his napkin while the wonderfully mixed bag of guests around the table pitches into dinner and conversation as the curtain comes down on "You Can't Take It with You." Tracy Lord (it's Katharine Hepburn, to be sure) smiles distantly at Van Heflin, early on in "The Philadelphia Story," and repeats the name of his plebeian birthplace in a never-heard-of-it tone of wonder: "South Bend—it sounds like dancing." Leo G. Carroll, a tweedy Scotland Yard detective, hurries out of the darkened parlor in "Angel Street" as we hear the key of the murderous Vincent Price in the door, and once again, in company with everyone else in the orchestra, I half rise from my seat to croak out, "Your hat! You forgot your hat!" Ed Wynn, in baggy pants and wearing what looks like a cupcake on his head, crosses his eyes and burbles "I'm tho exthited!" in "Simple Simon," while I weep and gasp with laughter (sorry: I was ten), and a couple of seconds or seasons later Sam Levene, bent double under the weight of his forehead wrinkles, flings his beat-up fedora on the floor and leaps for the phone again in "Room Service."

These are public-domain hats and memories, still shared by many hundreds of men and women my age, and available to anyone else, on the "Theatre" shelves in the nearest library, but they feel private. Only the theatre, I think, conserves movements and snatches of talk and music in this family-album fashion. And tones of voice. I can exactly hear the faintly Middle European accent with which Paul Lukas delivers his anguished "I have stopped a man's life!" in Lillian Hellman's anti-Nazi wringer, "Watch on the Rhine"—a forewarning, well understood by me, there in 1941, of further killings in store for the world. I also pick up Raymond Massey's worn, twanging tones as he says goodbye to his fellow-townsmen ("I have passed here from a young man to an old one") in Robert Sherwood's "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," and, just as clearly, Brian Aherne airily declaiming verse as the boyish Robert Browning in "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," and The Lord (Richard B. Harrison), with his deep-voiced, kindly aside to a part of the scenery in "The Green Pastures": "How you flowahs makin' out?" These voices are in my head. With slight effort, I can almost bring forth, as well, three or four differently stagy and British ways of uttering "with a bare bodkin," as Leslie Howard and Maurice Evans and John Gielgud and Richard Burton (I missed Barrymore) severally draw or hold up Hamlet's dagger; it was Evans' "his quietus make" that produced, upon the "t," a little accompanying spray of saliva that glittered in the footlights as it flew toward us. (Enunciating the Bard, as we know, requires some serious spit.)

Going to plays back then could be a complicated experience. Leaving the theatre in numbed silence after Mildred Dunnock's requiem lines in "Death of a Salesman," or, a dozen years earlier, aflame with a solidarity ignited in the union hall of "Waiting for Lefty," I felt at one with the strangers who had sat around me. "Oklahoma!" did the same thing, in happier fashion, because it made us feel so wonderful, there in the middle of the war; a day or two after my wife and I saw the show, I went off to the Central Pacific for two years. More often, though, in those small theatres, I felt myself alone with some ravishing individual a bare few yards away in the lights. Margaret Sullavan, huskily sighing in "The Voice of the Turtle," entered my heart in two seconds (the record still stands), and Ethel Merman, a brassy big sister, saved her best songs—"You're the Top," "Friendship," "Moonshine Lullaby"—just for me. Ray Bolger, weightless and amiable as he soft-sang and stepped his "Once in Love with Amy," was the nicest man I'd ever met.

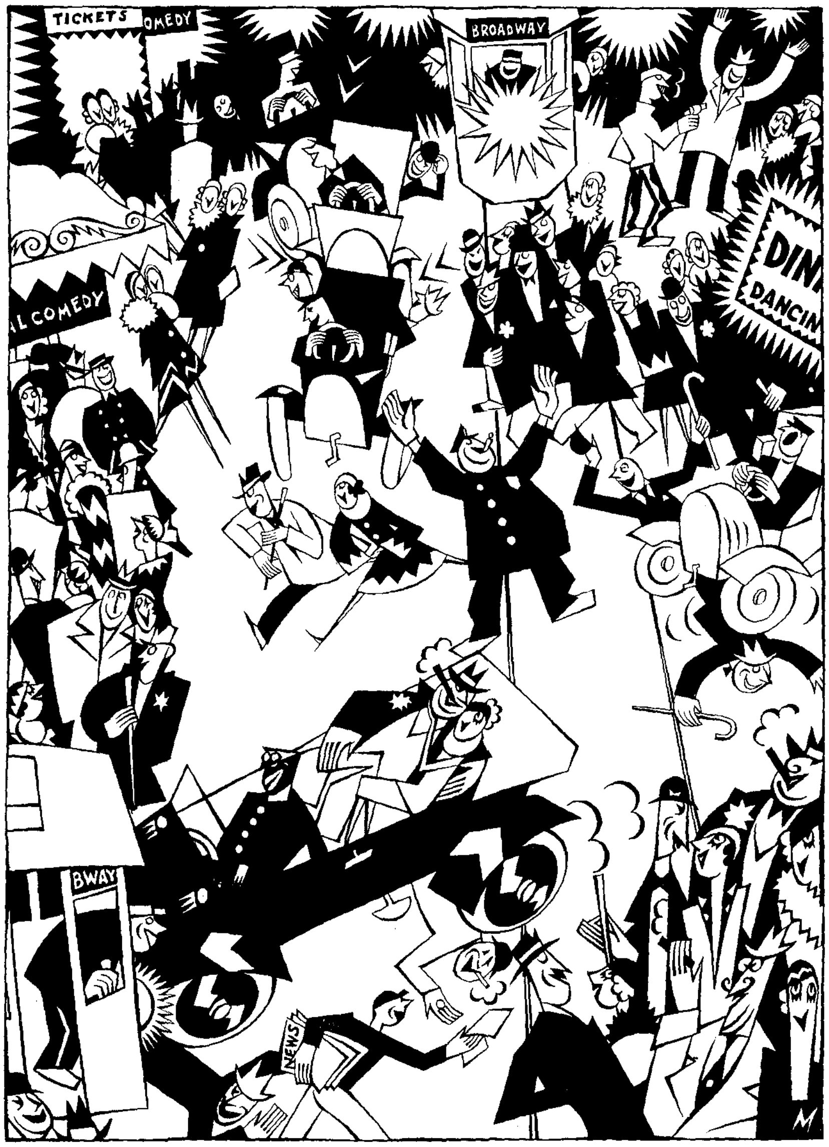
Everyone in those audiences felt the same way, of course, and these privately held and publicly shared experiences became a language of friendship and intimacy for my generation. Listening to a band work through a medley from "Pal Joey" (it was 1941, and I was in college), the girl I was dancing with and I absolutely knew that "I Could Write a Book" would segue on the next beat into "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered," and we had the choruses and the verses to both songs by heart; if the set then moved on to "Our Little Den of Iniquity," which had not yet made the records or the radio, and my partner breathed that little "knock . . . on . . . wood" into my ear on the pause, it meant that she'd seen the show, too, and she and I became Vivienne Segal and Gene Kelly, just for a moment there on the shining floor.

Theatre is many things, and the Broadway of my youth, seen now, feels like a club, an acquired knowledge and language and a set of gilded friends, to be shared among a few of us—a few thousand, at most—who were lucky enough to be in or near New York just then, and swift enough to grab such a gift on the fly. The plays and musicals were commercial inventions aimed with some precision at people like us, and the productions did not stay around for long; a few months' run gave us our chance, and then they were taken away, and another comedy or revue or revival or drama was wheeled in. There were plenty of flops, but they did not feel like gigantic plane crashes, the way they do now. You shrugged, and changed your plans; there were a couple of other shows just down the street that you were dying to catch anyway. The theatre then seemed to have a breath and life of its own, and its history, year by year, was something we cared about and had hopes for. I think we knew all along that it couldn't last.

That Broadway has gone away. I went on attending plays into the sixties and after, though less often, and somewhere along in there it became a different experience. There were moving and surprising evenings, but even when they happened, some of the stuff onstage had begun to feel distant or off key. Maybe it was the miking, maybe it was the new mechanics—sets that took wing or changed into something else; they took your breath away sometimes, and your belief as well. I began to sense some loss of belief on the other side of the lights, too. Stage voices became louder, and performances more tinged with camp or a winking self-parody. The proscenium could no longer quite hold us, and the players and playwrights (and we in the audience) had to pretend harder now, in the hope that no one would notice. Inside the swollen new theatres or perched on the cramped Off Broadway racks, the audiences had changed, too. There were more businessmen and tourist groups and benefit parties, and we ticket-holders eyed each other doubtfully, wondering if anything special could happen here tonight to bring us together. Mostly, it didn't.

Maybe this is my fault. I am older than I was, and less susceptible to contrivance. Like so many of us, I have been worked over and altered by hundreds of movies and thousands of hours of television; theatre in multiple varieties is available to me every day, and I am blurred by the common satiety. Movies do more for me now than the theatre. I feel more expectant at a movie than when I'm at a play, and more private, there in the dark, once the movie has begun. Even a very bad movie doesn't bring on the claustrophobic horror that seizes me when I'm at a play that doesn't work. I take this loss of good will as a failure, but the blame is not mine alone. The theatre should be better than it is.

I have lost Broadway, I'm afraid, but I notice that I haven't entirely lost hope. Sitting in the orchestra once again, with a shiny program in my hand and the comforting rows and cherubs of some ancient theatre (Oh, it's *this* one, I thought, coming in) encircling me as before, I feel the tawdry, long-gone enchantment of the stage putting its moves on me yet again. A cold, thrilling New York winter night is full of converging cabs and crowds, the mounted cops are islanded on their great steeds, and men in dark clothes and women in furs and long gloves come together under the marquee lights, where a warm, scented air from within reaches out invitingly. We take our places. The lights are coming down and the curtain grows golden, and within each of us the old childish wish arises as we await the illuminated stage and the two and a half hours just ahead: Come on, let's do it. Let's fall in love. ♦



THE GAY WHITE WAY

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

BY MARSHALL BRICKMAN

Anthony Moon (Zeckendorf) was born in England and attended Eton, Wibley, and Miss Gobbett's Academy, concluding his formal education at St. Vitus's College, Oxford, where he studied *moue* under the brilliant House Beamish. His first professional job was as Obadiah in the revue *A Pound of Cheese*, which ran for fifteen years at the Wee-Theatre-in-the-Bog, breaking all records for the West End and closing only when the cast set fire to the scenery. After joining the National Theatre, Mr. Moon was acclaimed for his performances as Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Monroe Parch in *Parsippany Place*, and Sir Giggling Fatbody in Sheridan's *The Wind-Sucker*. Mr. Moon is the author of *A Penn'orth of Rumply*, a fantasy for "children of all ages" based on the limericks of Albert Speer, which is currently in preparation for the 1977 season. His autobiography, *Scones at Eventide*, was a best-seller and will be filmed by the Rank Organisation, featuring Colin Ponce and Colin Headstrong-Jones as the twin bakers.

Mishru Fek (Curley) in a long and distinguished theatrical career has appeared in over three thousand productions, from Second Avenue cabaret (*Don't Make Me Laugh*, *So Who Are You Kidding?*, *I'm Entitled*, and *You Should Live So Long*) to regional theatre (Chaim in *The Wild Mouse*, Vontz in *Crusts*) to Broadway, where he triumphed last season as the grief-stricken father in *Runteleh*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical drawn from the life of Eddie Carmel, the Jewish giant. In recent years, Mr. Fek has divided his time between *King Lear* ("twice a year, rain or shine") and Hollywood; his latest films include *Blood of the Face Eaters*, *Nostril from Outer Space*, and *Monster Beach Party*. His television credits include numerous specials, notably an abbreviated version of *Runteleh*, for which he won the coveted Emmeleh. The Department of State has engaged Mr. Fek to tour Europe with his phenomenal one-man show *Jews in Motion*, an entertainment based on the *responsa* of Chodish, the skating rabbi of Budapest.

Mary Beth Numkins (Nell Runcible) is a self-professed "stage kook" who has appeared in stock and regional theatre. Among her favorite roles are Molly in *Tom O'Monahoon's Chowder*, Sally in *The Misty Bog*, Wendy in *The Bosky Fen*, Peggy in *The Dusky Glen*, and Polly in *Poppa's Pockmark*. She appeared as Princess Tinkle-Beam in *Toast and Mrs. Toast* and won plaudits for her portrayal of the shepherdess in *The Bleat of My Heart*. She maintains that the theatre is a "special, magical place, made of fairy-webs and gossamer." She lives in New York City with her cat, Mister Cat, and George Steinbrenner.

Boyd Boyd (Second Woodcutter, Biff) was first seen in the popular Off Broadway erotic revue *Full Frontal* and also appeared in its sequel, *Making It Big*, which Mr. Boyd described as "a truth trip with some very beautiful human beings." In a change of mood, he also created the role of the sadistic orderly in *Enema*. Mr. Boyd's lack of hangups will be evident next season in the Public Theatre's production of *Nude Hobson's Choice*, to be presented "someplace outside, Queens maybe." His hobbies are cooking with a wok and getting into people's heads.

Lynda Bunting (Mrs. Peahen) made her theatrical debut thirty years ago in Tennessee Williams' *For the Safety of the Passengers, the Driver Is Not Permitted to Change Any Bills Larger Than Five Dollars*, playing the harelip to Luther Dabchick's waterhead. After a hiatus of twenty-eight years, she returned to Broadway last season in the revival of *Perfervid Desires*, which closed during the first act, although the critics were unanimous about her performance. This marks Miss Bunting's first appearance in the legitimate theatre without a mobcap.

René Catafalque (Beggars, Whores, Townspeople)

> To act is to be;
> To be is merely to seem.
> The truth is a hat.
> —Hans Ekhardt

O'Bob Macvout (Director) trained at L.A.M.D.A. and the Yale Drama School under Fleming Pease, directing revue and cabaret (*Redoubtable Antics of '62*, *Arty-Tarty*). After a spell in television, he directed the wildly successful nature film *Ring of Bright Beavers* ("Vapid family fun! Nonthreatening!"—L.A. *Times*), which grossed six hundred million dollars worldwide and won him three Oscars, two Patsys, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Last season he directed Sir Henry Wolfsbane in the highly acclaimed R.S.C. production of Congreve's *Pox; or, The Traducer Traduced*, which won both the Drama Circle Critics Citation Prize Award and the Award Circle Drama Critics Prize Citation.

Leon Matrix (Sets and Lighting) is one of our most versatile designers, whose work ranges from the long-running *Leafy Green Vegetables* to the costumes for *Mary's Nose*. Trained under Schlemmer and Gropius, he did pioneering work at both the Bauhaus and the Bau-wau-haus, the avant-garde Theatre for Hounds he designed for Piscator in Berlin. More recently, he won the rarely awarded Mortimer for *Roach!*, the musical version of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, which will be presented on Broadway every season by David Merrick. He is four feet tall.

Arnold Batfish (Author) spent several years as an advertising copywriter and burst upon the theatrical scene with a cathartic evening of one-acters: *Spearmint*, *Doublemint*, and *Excremint*, which won him both a Nudlicer and a Peavy. His dental trilogy, *Drill*, *Fill*, and *Rinse*, *Please*, was hailed as the finest American dental writing in fifty years and was compared to Gogol's *The Overbite* and Sophocles' *Oedipus in Pyorrhea*. Mr. Batfish resides with his wife, Laura, and her wife, Leslie, at Nutmeat College, North Carolina, where he holds the Robert Goulet Chair of Dramaturgy.

Ahmet Ergotamine (Producer) has been represented on Broadway by *Goodbye, My Toes* and the smash hit musical *Morons Over Manhattan*, currently in its third season. In association with Max Rubric he produced *The Man in the Paper Pants* and *The Smell of Shapiro* for the Colloid Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. Mr. Ergotamine's reputation as a promotional genius dates from 1950, when he employed a chimpanzee in a miter to unicycle through the theatre district to publicize his knockabout religious farce, *Bishopzapoppin!* His innovative all-black production of *The Dance of Death* was followed by an equally successful all-male-Pakistani *Riders to the Sea* and an all-parrot *Importance of Being Earnest*. Next spring, he will produce *Death of a Salesman* in New Orleans with everyone (cast and audience) wearing giant papier-mâché Mardi Gras heads, borrowed from the Grand Krewe of the Knights of Toulouse. ♦

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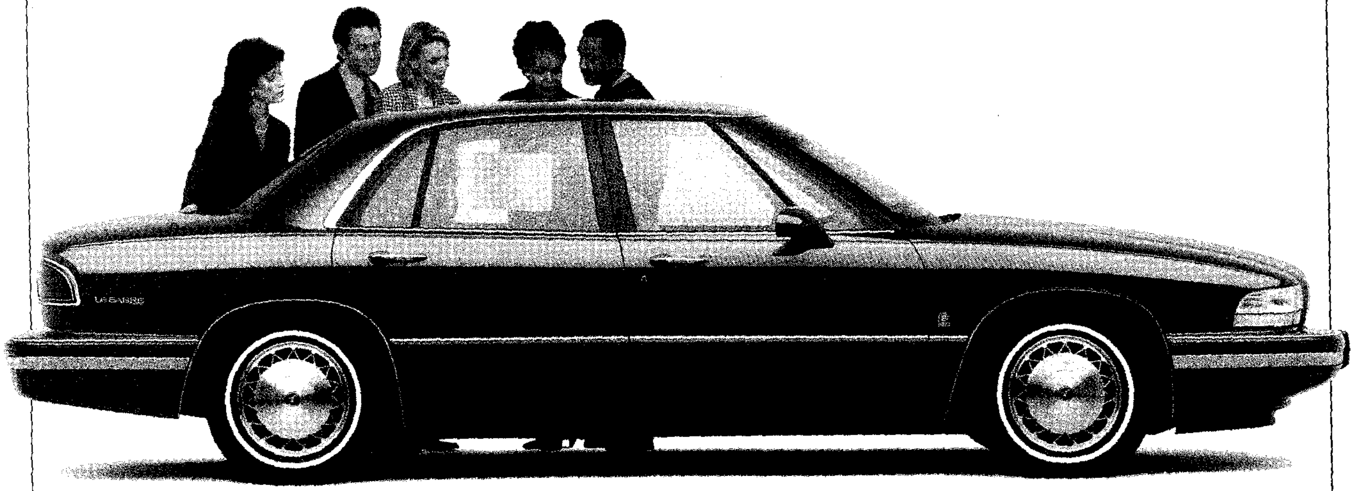

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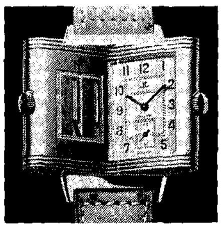

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THE CRITICS

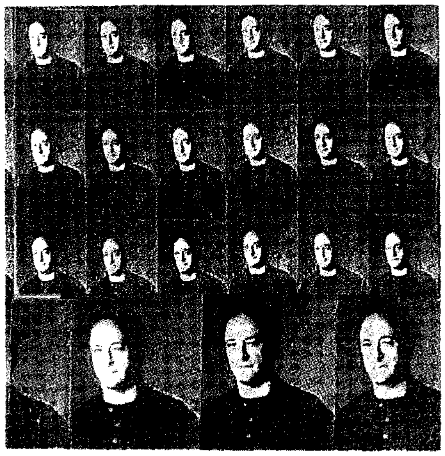
MUSICAL EVENTS

ABRAHAM AND IBRAHIM

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

IN 1988, when Steve Reich's "Different Trains" was played for the first time, the composer spoke of his hope that it would lead him to "a new kind of documentary music video theater." Now we know what he meant—or, at least, now we can begin to perceive what he may have been hoping for. I'd rather put it that way, because "The Cave," which had its first performance earlier this month in Vienna and will come to BAM in October, is a remarkable adventure that feels more like a journey than like an arrival, perhaps largely because of Mr. Reich's honorable reluctance to push his material toward a decisive artistic destination.

As in "Different Trains," much of the material comes from recorded interviews—from fragments of speech, rarely exceeding a short sentence—which in "The Cave" are delivered by people seen on video screens, and are usually rerun a couple of times in the midst of imitations from instruments and sometimes voices. To take a memorable example, a recorded speaker in the third act of this two-and-a-half-hour piece tells firmly of Abraham's divine calling—"God says go, I'll tell you where later"—and the phrase becomes a musical theme: three strong beats, the last resting high, followed by a desinence of short notes, with each pitch approximating the speaker's pitching of his voice. This theme can now be played by a violin, or sung by a tenor, or reproduced by any or all of an ensemble that includes four singers (two sopranos, tenor, and baritone), a string quartet (a link to "Different Trains," which was written for the Kronos Quartet), two woodwind players, and a typical Reichian assembly of percussion and keyboards, all precision-controlled by the conductor, Paul Hillier, to chime with the pictures. Word becomes note. Language is translated into music in a way that's both unusually direct and curiously automatic.



Steve Reich's new multimedia piece, "The Cave," is concerned with two word-centered faiths, those of Judaism and Islam.

This is one expression of Mr. Reich's documentary faithfulness to the voices, which he and his collaborator (also his wife), Beryl Korot, collected. Voices, voices—quilts of voices—give "The Cave" its being, and their utterances and musical echoes, beyond all that they immediately say, seem to be repeating the opening of St. John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word." It's a solemnly appropriate message to be hearing in a piece concerned with two word-centered faiths, those of Judaism and Islam. Words generate the musical ideas. Further words lie behind the recorded words, since what all the dozens of videotaped respondents are talking about—and not just the one I cited—is the gallery of stories associated with a name the voices speak differently as Abraham or Ibrahim. Mr. Reich and Ms. Korot put simple questions to the people they interviewed in Jerusalem, Hebron, New York, and Austin during the four years of the work's preparation, asking "Who is Abraham?" and asking the same with regard to Sarah, Hagar, Isaac, and Ishmael. "The Cave" resounds with the different, sometimes discordant, answers.

In that respect, the piece fits its title. Listening to it is like tuning in to words that have been spoken, and go on reverberating, in some great cavern: new words and old words, the words of living people and the words of the Bible and the Koran, quotations from both of which are interleaved with the fragmented interviews. "The Cave" is also a cave in its physical layout for performance. John Arnone's set is a functional metal scaffolding that provides a vertical checkerboard of five screens for video display and several apertures for musicians, with, down below, a cavity for the string quartet, two pianos, and some of the percussion. But the title's most direct reference is to the cave of Machpelah, in the West Bank town of Hebron, which is reputed to be the burial place of Abraham/Ibrahim and his wife, and is the location of one of the few places of worship in the world where Jews and Muslims can pray together—or, at any rate, simultaneously. That place, built by the Byzantines as a little church on top of a massive Herodian structure, above the cave site, is the goal of each of the first two acts, in which the voices are Jewish and Muslim, respectively.

The Jewish first act is almost as long

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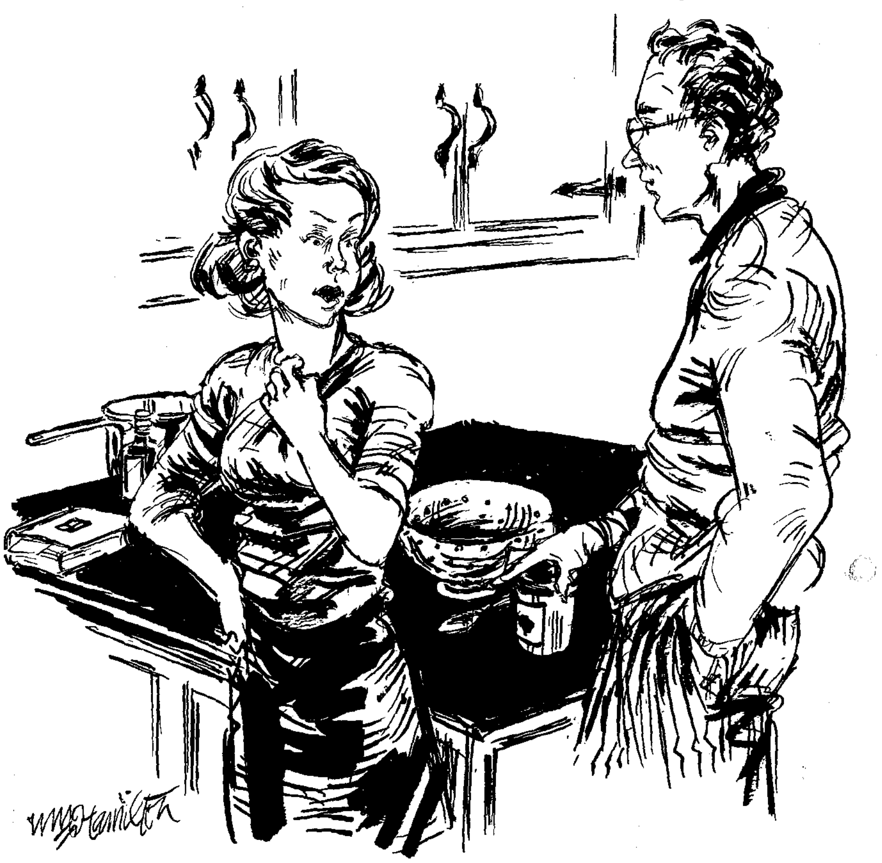
as the two others put together, and the feeling of extension is increased by the fact that it's also—surely deliberately—discontinuous. Sections of interview material shuffle on and off, to be replaced by episodes from Genesis and the Midrash, which are sung or else slapped onto the screens, syllable by syllable, in time with the pulses of percussion music. There are also segments of unaccompanied speaking, of chant, of unpleasant scrawling as ballpoint pens write out the "Who is" questions, and of engine noise as we drive toward Hebron for the finale of this act.

Ms. Korot's video show follows the music in its course and in letting the raw material show through. The talking heads aren't subjected to any questioning or editorial scrutiny, except occasionally and tacitly in the way they're juxtaposed. "There is great power attached to this place," one speaker says of Machpelah. According to the next, "The cave is for the dead, not for the living." Meanwhile, Mr. Reich's music makes no comment; rather, it only suggests the attentive listening that was necessary to its composition. And though that listening may have been addressed principally to the manner rather than to the matter of the answers, the reiterated musical phrases implicitly reiterate the spoken words that gave rise to them, and indicate, like calligraphy on an Islamic bowl or archway or garment, that text is both sacred and the only legitimate source of ornamentation.

Where Mr. Reich is obliged to invent music in order to project words that come to him in written form—the words of Genesis, say—he adopts a style of plain, light declamation similar to that of parts of his last work with singing voices, "The Desert Music," but without that work's embedding orchestral richness. This first act of "The Cave" is austerely wary of musical enrichment, and its severely sectional structure implies that the documentary intention is foremost, on two levels. What we're offered is a catalogue of evidence: the evidence of Jewish people, both living and long dead, as to the meaning of Abraham's mission, and the evidence of videotapes and written questions as to how the piece we're experiencing came to be put together.

Being so overt about its construction, this Jewish part of "The Cave" exemplifies the persistence and the frankness that have always been characteristic of Mr. Reich's work. There are no secrets. We're shown what's going on. And the



"Oh, you were on automatic pilot? And what about her? Was she on automatic pilot, too?"

showing is the piece. As he wrote of "It's Gonna Rain," one of his early tape compositions, "once the process has been set up it inexorably works itself out." The essential difference is that the process in the first act of "The Cave" is not a purely aural one—of rhythms sliding against each other, or of notes gradually being sustained through intervening silences—but, instead, a process of assembling videotaped and written testimony, and one in which the music is subordinated to what is seen and what is heard spoken. It becomes apparent that there's a fierce conflict implanted in Mr. Reich's notion of "documentary music video theater"—a conflict not between music and video, since those aspects are so well conjoined, but between documentary and art. The musical replays and the video blowups teach us nothing about Jewish responses to the Abraham stories; the piecemeal documentary form repeatedly requires the music to stop and start again, and so opposes its inclinations to keep on going—to keep on repeating and pulsating.

That conflict continues into the second act, which moves from Genesis and Israelis to the Koran and Arabs. The structure is more regular: there's simply a slow alternation of interview material with Koranic chanting before we arrive, as in the first act, at Machpelah. However, Mr. Reich's participation is now limited to the interview sections, since Islam permits no musical accompaniment to the traditional intoning of the Koran. In order not to have his singers idle throughout this act, Mr. Reich has them singing the speech-derived melodies, which in the first act were only interpreted by instruments. This isn't a happy device. The soloists' singsong repetitions suggest a Protestant world of hymns and choir leaders, despite the exclusively Semitic origins of the spoken material, and despite the composer's own Jewish background (though here Copland's music provides a parallel: a vividly close parallel when, as often happens, Mr. Reich's bare string octaves recall "Appalachian Spring," in all its innocence).

In keeping, again, with their documentary idealism, Mr. Reich and Ms. Korot register the divergences between the Israeli and the Arab acts without any emphasis or commentary. One speaker in the second act calmly insists that Ibrahim was a Muslim. We hear—or, rather, in the case of those of us not

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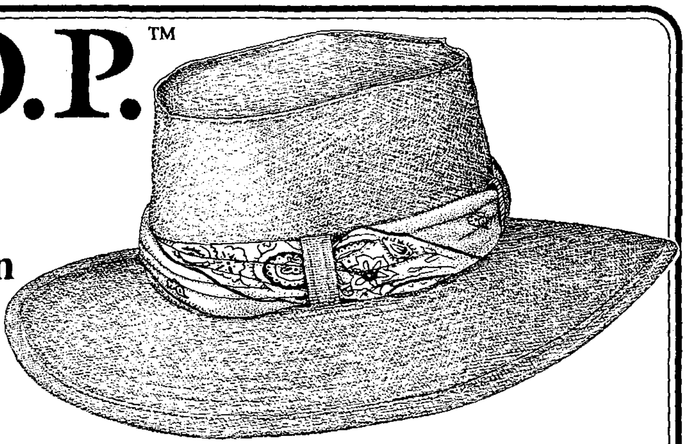

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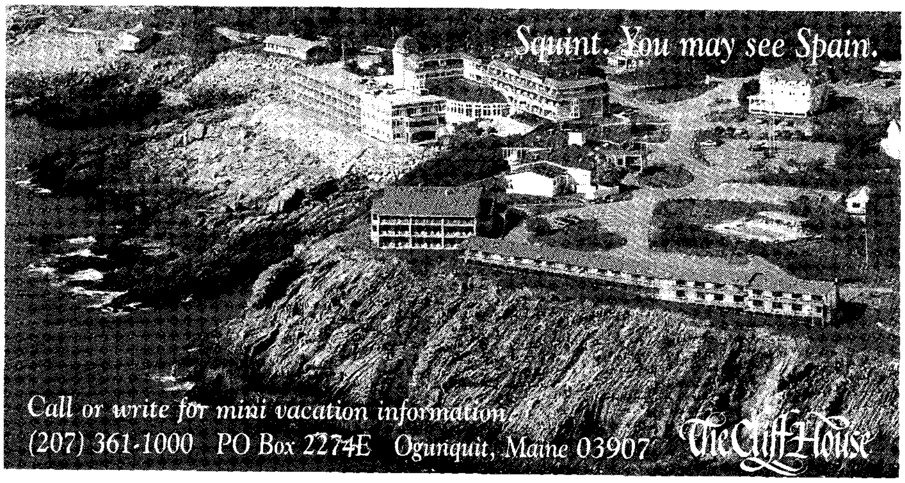
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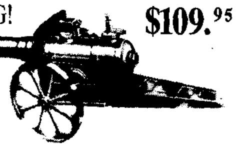

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versed in classical Arabic, we read, in English, German, or French on the screens—the Koran giving its own version of the sacrifice story, in which the saved victim is not Isaac but his elder half brother Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabs. At the same time, the discrepancies among the projected texts quietly signal the Koran's remoteness from Europe-derived culture: this is, for most of us, the other view. As if, though, to affirm the brotherhood of Isaac and Ishmael, the second act ends exactly as the first did, with shots of Israeli soldiers slung with automatic weapons inside the Machpelah sanctuary, and with the string quartet picking up the A-minor drone of the building's natural resonance.

But, as Mr. Reich has said, "we can't solve the problems of the Middle East." Accordingly, his third act, in which the faces and voices are American, spins away from controversy. The witnesses are now more various: black Christians and white atheists, a Jew and a Buddhist, a young man of Hopi descent and a woman Episcopal priest, distinguished figures (Carl Sagan, Richard Serra, Arthur Danto) and students. As one might expect, the clashes are far more abundant and violent. A young black woman, speaking of the Bible, remarks, "When people say to me it has nothing to say to us I think they've never read it." To which Mr. Serra immediately and obligingly adds, "Old Testament never read it," with a change in the melody of those last three shared words which speaks of a certain satisfaction. Where the responses of the Israeli and then of the Arab speakers moved in the same direction, albeit with occasional frictions, the Americans are all over the place. There's also another difference. The people recorded in Jerusalem and Hebron, whether Jews or Muslims, were agreed on a principle about themselves: I have my meaning to the extent that I relate to history. Hence the importance of genealogy and tradition. However, for the people recorded in New York and Austin this principle is reversed: History has its meaning to the extent that it relates to me.

The diversity of the American material is, for Mr. Reich, a release from obligations to treat text as sacred, and his third act is, at last, a continuous and exuberant musical structure, combining the interviews with sung imitations, as in the second act, and with sung stories, as in the first. This is where we hear of Abraham and Isaac in a patchwork of Bible verses and modern comments ("The kid knows that something is about to happen") which moves away from the passivity of the first-act Genesis settings to achieve a mounting tension. This is also where we hear the story of Abraham entertaining angels unawares, with its beautiful Midrashic gloss about how he went into the cave of Machpelah "and found Adam and Eve on their biers, and they slept, and lights were kindled above them, and a sweet scent was upon them." In this act, Ms. Korot's screens also become livelier, and move beyond dutiful presentation of the speakers to show us patterns and ribbons of color created out of features of dress or background.

The brilliant success of this third act is possible because, as in "Different Trains," there's a harmony between documentary and artistic intentions. In the quartet piece, it was a harmony of live instrumentalists and reminiscing voices both travelling, both shuttling in pulsed rhythms, both moving along prepared tracks. In the last act of "The Cave," it's a harmony of rush and contradiction, in which the very inconsistency of the speakers seems to have allowed Mr. Reich to mix and match them as he musically pleased. Because this part of the piece is so much more pepped up, it might be better to play the entire work continuously, instead of giving the audience a single break just before things start to get interesting.

One could maybe object that the triumph of the third act is a triumph of life's vanities—color, humor, animation—over the serious discussion of contending loyalties and traditions. One could also say that it's a triumph for optimism and the human capacity to begin afresh. We finally learn that there may be no real cave—nothing under the Byzantine church and the Herodian mausoleum, nothing to anchor people in inevitable enmities. Those were the wisest words: "The cave is for the dead, not for the living." Mr. Reich's work, in its last half hour, makes its escape from the cave of record. ♦

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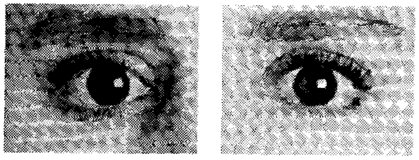
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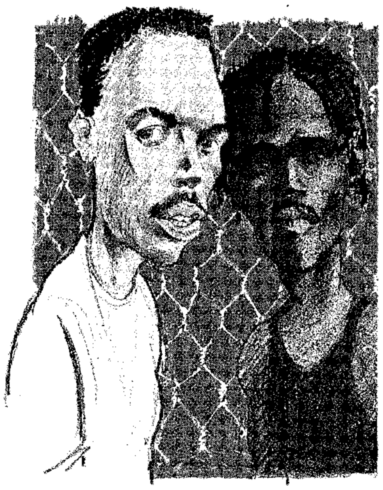
DEAD END

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

"MENACE II SOCIETY," an inner-city crime melodrama directed by Allen and Albert Hughes, is a speedy, violent, adolescent-cynical take on the no-hope lives of young black men. The hero, who narrates his story in voice-over, is a luckless eighteen-year-old named Caine Lawson (Tyrin Turner), born to a drug-dealer father and an addict mother, and raised by his pious, out-of-it grandparents on a godforsaken street in Watts. When he is a little boy, his most compelling role model is Pernell (Glenn Plummer), a genial petty crook who gives the youngster the thrill of hefting a real gun. His childhood memories also include watching his daddy shoot a man dead across a card table in the Lawsons' living room—the first of several murders he saw his father commit, the narrator's voice tells us. "I got used to it," he says, matter-of-factly. As a teen-ager, Caine does some street dealing himself, goes to school just frequently enough to earn his diploma (a fifty-per-cent attendance record is apparently all it takes), and hangs out with a loose-knit crew of neighborhood buddies, who range from the relatively sane Sharif (Vonte Sweet), a comically preachy Muslim, to the psychotic O-Dog (Larenz Tate), a laughing killer with a hair-trigger temper.



On the mean streets: Tyrin Turner and Larenz Tate in "Menace II Society."

Caine's aspirations are shockingly low; he doesn't even dream, as the heroes of thirties and forties gangster movies did, of criminal glory. Scarface's guiding principle—the neon-lit advertising slogan proclaiming "The World Is Yours"—wouldn't make any sense to Caine, who knows that the world outside Watts is not destined to be his. And the mantra of the Cagney character in "White Heat"—his goal of getting to the "top of the world"—would ring false to him, too, even in the narrowest terms; Caine's immediate, mean-streets world doesn't have a top that's worth rising to. When his grandfather asks him, rhetorically, "Do you care whether you live or die?" he thinks for a few seconds and replies, "I don't know."

The Hugheses are black twenty-one-year-old twins whose previous filmmaking experience consists of music videos (for Digital Underground and KRS-One, among others) and an episode of "America's Most Wanted." In "Menace II Society" they put their brisk, kinetic, uninflected style to good use; for the most part, it seems the right approach for conveying Caine's illusionless world view. If the screenplay (by twenty-three-year-old Tyger Williams) had the classic rise-and-fall structure of earlier gangster films, the Hugheses' technique would probably feel too cool, too offhand for the material. The movie isn't interested in tragic irony; it aims, instead, for the throwaway, life-is-cheap tone of grimy fifties B-pictures, like the brutal pulp thrillers that Sam Fuller made in his heyday. The filmmakers move from horror to horror in a businesslike, deadpan way that reflects, with frightening conviction, the thoroughness of their hero's alienation.

Initially, the picture's lack of sentimentality is refreshing. "Menace II Society" doesn't romanticize teen-age machismo, as hard-core rap music often does, or bog down in positive-image pieties, as movies made by older black filmmakers sometimes do. At its best, it expresses a freezing anger at the conditions that young men like Caine grow up in. The childhood-memory sequences are concise and devastating: Caine's no-big-deal attitude as he recalls the barbarities of his early home life is reinforced by the Hugheses' swift, laconic editing—the direction makes us feel the numbing effect of day-to-day exposure to violence. Of all the awful things that happen to Caine in the course of the film—he's roughed up by cops, betrayed by friends, and shot several times—none seem worse than this fundamental warping of his consciousness, these childhood lessons in the casual acceptance of inhumanity.

Throughout the picture, the mixed-up young hero's responses to events waver, convincingly, between the moral indifference apparently demanded by the harsh street life of Watts and a faint, vestigial sensitivity that he's afraid to give free rein to. He's not a pure sociopath, like his friend O-Dog, who, in the movie's extraordinary opening scene, kills the Korean owners of a convenience store because he feels that they've insulted him. Caine, who's with him in the store, has enough decency left to be appalled by the senselessness of his pal's action, and enough intelligence to realize that O-Dog's lunatic pride in his feat makes him a dangerous partner. The killer rips the videocassette from the store's surveillance camera, but he doesn't destroy it; instead, he uses it as a kind of party tape, running the fatal few seconds over and over for his friends and gleefully reliving the moment himself. O-Dog, whom the hero characterizes as "the craziest nigger alive" and "America's nightmare," is a bold caricature, a memorable grotesque. The scenes of him watching his murder tape and shouting "Check this out, check this out—*boom!*" add up to an indelible image of the hideous emotional deformities that society's lower depths can sometimes produce.

O-Dog is a character that might have been conceived by Buñuel, whose 1950 "Los Olvidados," about slum kids in Mexico City, is the clearest-eyed and the most harrowing exploration of the cruel exigencies of poverty ever put on film. The Hugheses, though, don't really know what to do with O-Dog after they've established how dangerous he is. They give him another gratuitous-

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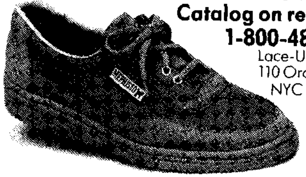

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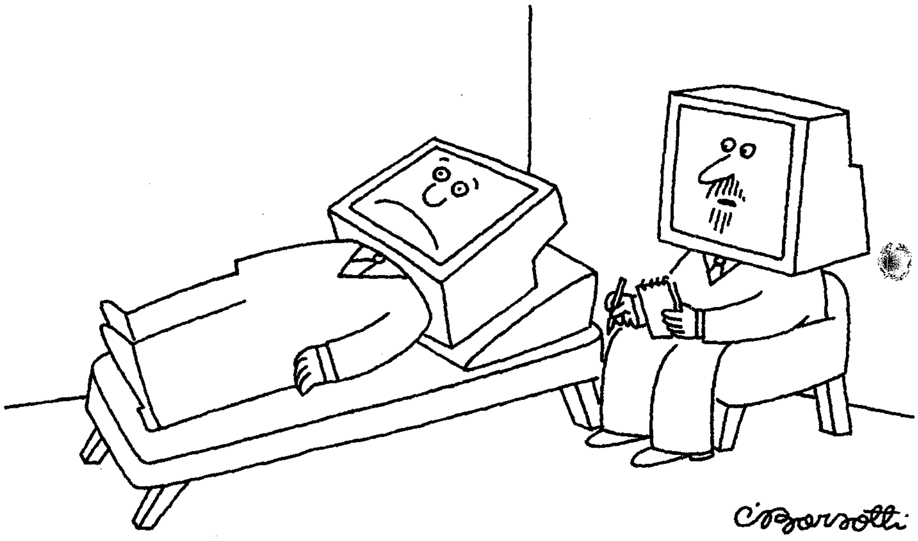
murder scene—he shoots a pathetic junkie who has offered to blow him in exchange for dope—but it feels like an unnecessary reiteration of the point made in the opening sequence. The filmmakers lack the rigor to keep pushing the character's pathology farther and farther—to take us past the realm of the unspeakable and into the territory of the sheerly inexplicable, which was Buñuel's home turf. The power of "Los Olvidados" is that it constantly surprises us with ever more bizarre symptoms of the slum culture's sickness, and systematically demolishes any possibility of a simple diagnosis; by the end of the picture, we feel dazed but, somehow, intellectually and emotionally restored—more appreciative of the mysteries of social evil and thus better equipped to think about its sources. The unsentimental B-movie toughness of "Menace II Society" is a step in the right direction, but the filmmakers, lacking the fearless instinct for human absurdity which enabled Buñuel to burst the confines of his naturalistic material, wind up running in place.

An American "Los Olvidados" is, of course, too much to ask for—especially from filmmakers in their early twenties. This movie's approach, which seems liberating at first, turns out to be, in a strange way, a creative trap. Williams' screenplay bravely rejects the conventions of both gangster and coming-of-age movies, and the Hugheses' direction is almost entirely free of liberal-humanist uplift, but the movie is so scrupulous, so comprehensive, in its refusal to do the usual things that it leaves itself short on expressive options as it searches for an ending to Caine's story. Its only hope, really, is that its pitiless tone and inexorable pace will somehow play as scabrous, fiercely concentrated urban poetry. The young men who made "Menace II Society" don't quite have the skills to bring off that difficult feat, except in isolated sequences. As the picture goes along, you actually start to wish that it were a little squarer, that the filmmakers would give you something more to hold on to than the grinding pulp momentum that substitutes here for true dramatic structure. O-Dog's incriminating tape, for instance, is virtually forgotten in the second half of the movie. Caine's story ends unhappily, but the actual cause of his downfall isn't related to the murder of the Koreans or to any of his own violent crimes; what dooms him is a relatively minor transgression, from a blink-and-you'll-miss-it subplot. The cheesy James M. Cain irony makes you nostalgic for the more conventional—but also grander—irony of the old gangster pictures. The juvenile, everything-sucks pessimism that "Menace II Society" ends with is reductive and depressingly facile. Do we have to believe that the circumstances of kids like Caine are so intractable to thought and to art that even filmmakers as talented and as intelligent as these are helpless to imagine any other kind of resolution? When "Menace II Society" was over, I almost did believe it, and then resented the movie for tempting me to feel that way. ◆



"It's all part of life. In time, each of us will be moved to the guest room."

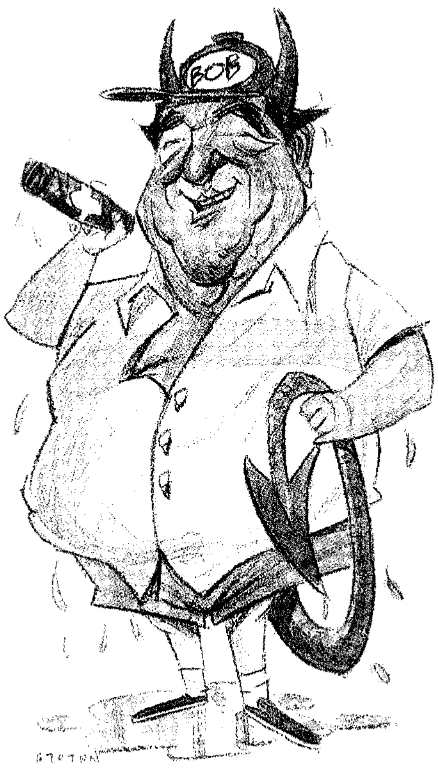
BOOKS

CALL HIM IRRESISTIBLE

BY JOHN MORTIMER

PRELIMINARY sketches of the monstrous creation that was the late, unlamented Mr. Robert Maxwell were made by two of the greatest English novelists. Of Mr. Merdle, the crooked financier in "Little Dorrit," who killed himself with a borrowed penknife when his empire collapsed, Dickens wrote, "He, the uncouth object of such wide-spread adulation . . . the recipient of more acknowledgment within some ten or fifteen years, at most, than had been bestowed in England upon all peaceful public benefactors, . . . was simply the greatest Forger and the greatest Thief that ever cheated the gallows." Mr. Melmotte, in Trollope's "The Way We Live Now," who cheerfully robbed with the use of phony railway shares, was finally "able to deliver himself from the indignities and penalties to which the law might have subjected him by a dose of prussic acid." Of the three Ms—Merdle, Melmotte, and Maxwell—the last seems the most exaggerated and bizarre. No novelist would have dared invent him.

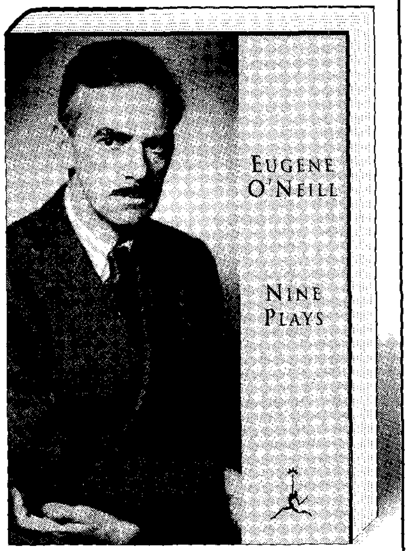
It wasn't merely that Maxwell was a liar and a fraud; from Falstaff on, there have been lovable liars and attractive frauds. It wasn't that he ate hugely and disgustingly, slurping and spilling beluga caviar, spitting watermelon seeds onto the carpet and requiring his secretaries to clear them up, dipping his saliva-soaked cigar ends into the wineglasses of ladies at dinner. It wasn't that he dyed his hair and eyebrows and frequently powdered his nose. It wasn't even that he thieved from poor and honest people on a giant scale, although that was cruel enough. The truly loathsome thing about Maxwell was that he enjoyed behaving like a sadistic tyrant, humiliating those who worked for him and even his devoted wife and children. The fascination of "Death of a Tycoon," by Nicholas Davies (St. Martin's; $22.95), is not only how and why Maxwell became so awful but why on earth so many people put up with him for so long. Davies, who chose to work for Maxwell and became—so the blurb on his book tells us—"closer to him than even his own family," remains an enigma surrounded by a mystery. Why the hell, the reader asks as the story lurches from insult to disaster, did he hang around with Robert Maxwell? I suppose he would give the same answer his boss would have given: "I did it for the money."



The fascination of Nicholas Davies's book is not only that Robert Maxwell became so awful but that so many people put up with him for so long.

DAVID STOTEN

Those seeking examples of Maxwell's brutality are almost too well served in this book. In one instance, he dismissed his wife, Betty, from his yacht and ordered her to pack her bags at two hours' notice; in another, when his daughter Ghislaine—after whom he named the yacht he really loved—suggested that she might sell corporate gifts for her father to Donald Trump, he encouraged her by asking, "Have you got your bum



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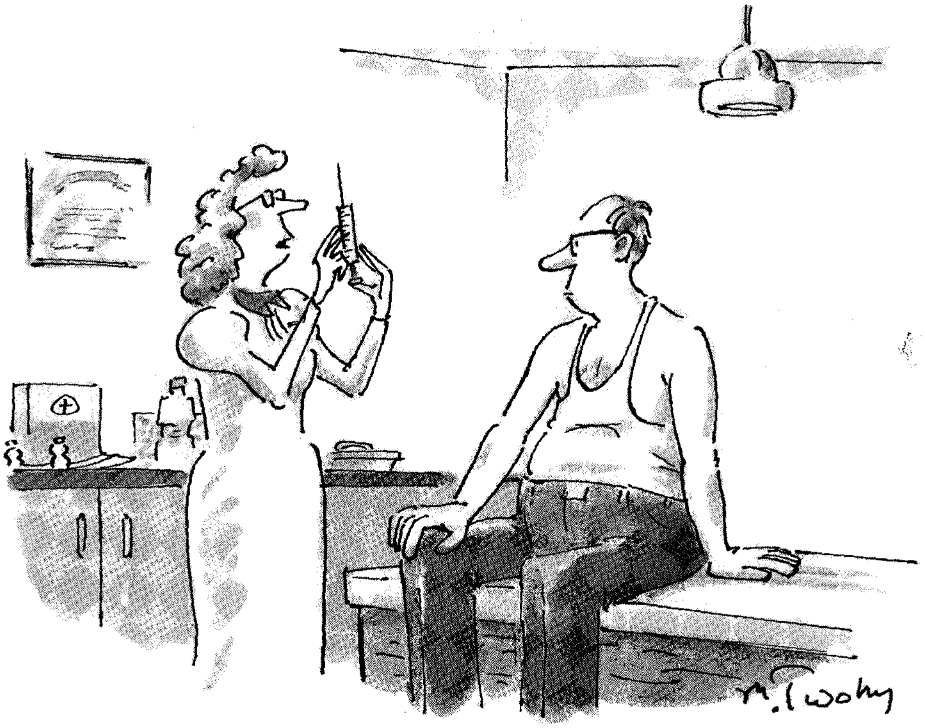

"This is going to be a little invasive."

• •

in your head? Why the fuck would Donald Trump want to waste his time seeing you with your crappy gifts?"

With others unfortunate enough to work for him he was less attractive. His top executives were made to wait for hours in a passage outside his office. He slapped his secretaries' bottoms, and when they politely showed him his invitations he would say, "Why the fuck would I want to go there? That place is the pimple on the arsehole of the country." Perhaps the most chilling stories concern Peter Jay, the former British Ambassador to Washington. (Why Jay ever took a job with Maxwell defies speculation; Maxwell's motive in offering it was clearly to take pleasure in humiliating someone who had been thought of as important and distinguished.) When Jay asked Maxwell, in Davies's presence, if he had read an urgent note he had left in the box on Maxwell's desk, the hysterical publisher of the Mirror Group screamed, "If it's so fucking important why did you put it in a fucking box? Why the hell didn't you give it to me like any sane person would?" Davies records that the former Ambassador simply retrieved the note from the box between them, handed it to Maxwell, and walked out of the room. Why didn't he walk out of the job? He is still there pages later, having to fax a long explanation of a brief absence from the office to Maxwell on his yacht.

Anyone searching for the origins of this outsized character gets lost in the mists of Maxwell's compulsive lying. But there appears to be no reason to doubt that he was born Ludvik Hoch on the border of Russia and Czechoslovakia, or that he left school at sixteen and dealt in cheap jewelry in the markets of Bratislava. When war came, his parents and many other relatives were murdered by the Nazis. Somehow, he escaped and made his way to England. In various accounts, he claimed that he was jailed and tortured by the Germans, and that he escaped by overpowering his one-armed guard on the way to court and had his "handcuffs removed by a gipsy lady." In England, he joined the Army and went through a bewildering succession of names. Because he smoked Du Maurier cigarettes, he became Ivan du Maurier. He was Leslie Jones when he was a sergeant, and when he was commissioned in the Queen's Royal Regiment he made his first appearance as Ian Robert Maxwell. There's also no reason to doubt that the newly invented lieutenant fought bravely in France and was decorated with the Military Cross by Field Marshal Montgomery. He was later promoted to captain.

In the chaos of postwar Berlin the

young Maxwell, fluent in many languages, became an officer of the Control Commission and founded his fortune. He made friends with Ferdinand Springer, who had been one of the world's most successful publishers of scientific books, helped him re-start his business, and made the contacts from which his own Pergamon Press grew to prosper and be plundered. His military triumphs adhered to him after the war, and until the nineteen-seventies his staff in England had to address him as "Captain." Later, as one of his unfortunate secretaries related, he allowed himself to be called "Mr. Maxwell" in bed.

I HAD only one encounter with Maxwell. We were to appear on a television show together, and he had said he would use his own chauffeur and Rolls to get from Holborn to the South Bank of the Thames. Ever nervous, the TV station sent a driver to follow Maxwell in case he had a breakdown. The shadowing driver arrived ashen-faced and trembling, because it was Maxwell's custom to order his chauffeur to drive through every red light at seventy miles an hour. Of our discussion, I remember that he sat, a huge twenty-stone figure, his trousers pulled up to reveal white calves and green socks, beaming round at the audience and announcing his plans to introduce wonderful quality television to Britain. When I said his record wasn't encouraging, as he had turned the *Daily Mirror*, a decent, honest, and effective Labour-supporting paper, into what often seemed like an advertising sheet for himself, Maxwell made a sound like bathwater escaping down a giant plughole and warned the audience not to take the slightest notice of a word I said. (In fairness to the outraged tycoon, the *Daily Mirror* is even worse now than it was before he stepped off the Lady Ghislaine.)

Quite early in Maxwell's publishing career, the Department of Trade and Industry inspectors decided that he wasn't a fit person to run a public company. He was, of course, deeply pained, and went on to buy the New York *Daily News* (which shortly before his death was, so Davies says, "losing money like water in a sieve"), to start numerous businesses (many of which collapsed), and, beginning in 1989, to rob the pension funds of around thirty thousand of his employees. *Private Eye* called him the Bouncing Czech. World leaders are apparently more gullible than satirical magazines or officials from the Department of Trade and Industry. At his death, Margaret Thatcher, who had referred to him as "one of us," said Maxwell had kept her informed of events in Eastern Europe; Gorbachev praised him; and John Major said that Maxwell wouldn't have wanted the world to grieve at his death but, rather, to "marvel at a quite extraordinary life." Early on, Maxwell must have realized that he could acquire such adulation by a mixture of bullying, mendacity, and charm. Once he knew he had this power, he used it to drive at high speed though every red light at every crossroads.

DAVIES'S book presents a bucketful of unappetizing information about the man he worked for but doesn't attempt any real analysis of either Maxwell's character or his own. This is a pity, because Maxwell's career would have been impossible without those whom he tricked or terrorized into working for him. I'm sure Davies knew nothing of Maxwell's criminal activities (such as robbing his employees' pension funds or treating money in public companies as though it were his own), but his adherence to such a man over a long period would seem to call for some self-examination.

Davies was the foreign editor of the *Daily Mirror*, a paper which, even before it deteriorated under Maxwell, didn't carry lengthy foreign stories. His main duty seems to have been keeping the boss company. Maxwell had a highly valued secretary named Andrea Martin, whom he found attractive. Davies and Martin had a love affair, which Maxwell immediately discovered. Thereafter he frequently telephoned Martin to abuse her, treated his foreign editor with veiled hostility, and sent him on frequent trips abroad to keep the lovers apart. Martin soon stopped working for Maxwell, but Davies didn't. He was forever jetting about on Maxwell's private plane, accompanying his employer to East Germany to see Honecker, or to Poland, where Maxwell strutted about before General Jaruzelski in a captain's uniform that he was no longer entitled to wear. Yet we don't know how the author felt about all this, what Andrea Martin thought, or how they explained their conduct to each other. We're left to regard them as Maxwell surely did—as mere extras in the long-running drama of the tycoon's life.

Many people who knew Maxwell said

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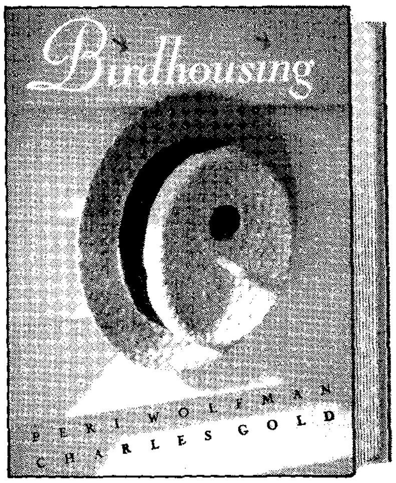

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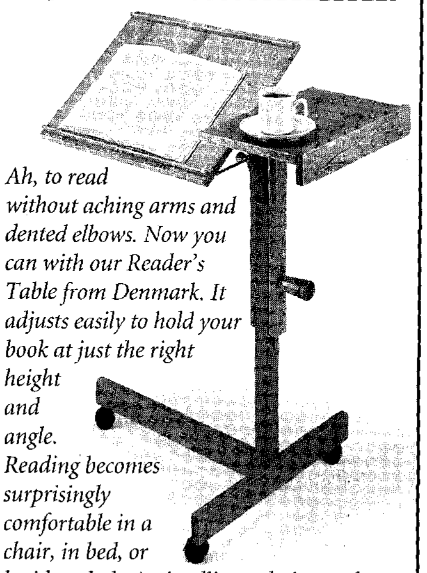

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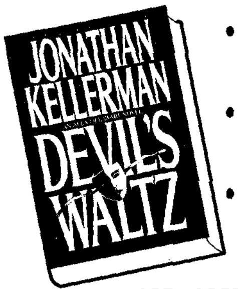

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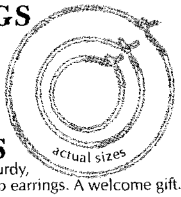

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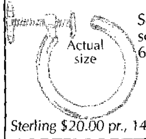

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he would never have committed suicide; he would have brazened out another financial disaster and bounced back somehow. So, it is often argued, he must have been murdered. He had many enemies, including the K.G.B., for whom he had stored away money in Liechtenstein that he was later unable to pay back; the Mafia, whom he had tried to cut out from their share in distributing the *Daily News;* and possibly the Mossad, although the Israelis did give Maxwell, who was a great advocate of Jewish causes, a slap-up funeral. When he disappeared from the Lady Ghislaine, his stateroom doors were found locked from the outside—a fact that's hard to explain, because Maxwell never closed doors after himself. Davies suggests that he slid into the sea and swam until he died of a heart attack, but that seems a curious way of committing suicide. The muscles of his shoulder were torn, and he didn't die of drowning. Whether he was killed or killed himself, Maxwell left members of his family facing bankruptcy and possible criminal proceedings and many of his employees deprived of their full pensions. At his funeral, Shimon Peres, another gullible world leader, said, "Here on the Mount of Olives eternity will absorb one of its greatest sons." Maxwell knew who would be top dog beyond the grave. He once said to a journalist who was preparing an obituary of him, "Go and write God's obituary first; it will be shorter."

How could Mr. Davies, how can we, explain the Maxwell phenomenon? He started life displaced—brutally cut off from his roots and with his family murdered. On this blank page he was free to invent his past and pick up a name wherever he fancied. Later on, his invention ran riot and he was able to make the world accept his fantasies. He reached his peak in a time which has grown used to accepting money as a standard of excellence. The lesson to be learned from this book is that if you let bullies and tyrants get away with it, it's bad for them and terrible for you. This is a book that should be read in every business school, bank, or law office where the rumor has gone around that the possession of money entitles anyone to respect. In the end, the money may turn out to be as fictional as Mr. Merdle, Mr. Melmotte, or Mr. Maxwell. ♦

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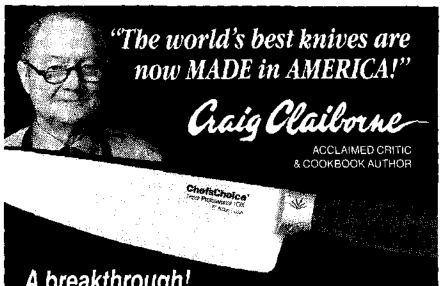

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by Jeffrey Eugenides
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $18)

THIS first novel is a tall tale of suburbia, spun out by a narrator who speaks for a group of middle-aged men unable to shake their adolescent infatuation with the beautiful Lisbon girls—Therese, Mary, Bonnie, Lux, and Cecilia. Twenty years ago, each of the sisters staged her own demise, beginning with Cecilia's dive from an upstairs window during a party thrown in her honor for surviving a wrist-slitting episode. Gradually, the Lisbon family withdraws, giving out telltale hints of middle-class life gone awry: last year's school clothes, unkempt lawn, Christmas lights going up a month late. The sisters' ostentatious endings liberate the imaginations of the neighborhood boys, who are transformed into a band of amateur necrologists, collecting every shred of Lisbon memorabilia—Polaroids, homework assignments, a tube top—and numbering them like fossils. The narrator has a teen-ager's mania for quirky detail and phonyness exposed, but it is the voice of encroaching age that gives the book its achy undercurrent of loss. In all the archival fuss, however, the girls themselves are lost; save for Cecilia and Lux, with her penchant for rooftop sex, they remain as mysterious as their suicidal drives, leaving the narrator to wonder if "our vigilance had been only the finger-printing of phantoms."

The Life and Times of Captain N.
by Douglas Glover
(Knopf; $20)

IF the word "sprawling" can be praise, this is a brief novel that sprawls—not because it is historical fiction but because its language is so sharp, so evocative, that the reader sees well beyond the tissue of words into a forbidding life called the past. Glover's narrative—set during the American Revolution in upper New York—is fragmentary but compelling, and the narrators are three: Captain Hendrick Nellis, a Tory and a "redeemer" of whites captured by Indians; Nellis's son, Oskar, who regards himself as a correspondent of General Washington's and a spy for the American rebels; and Mary Hunsacker, who was captured by Indians, redeemed by Hendrick Nellis, and courted by Oskar. Glover's book belongs, like Hugh Nissenson's "The Tree of Life," to the Apocalypse Then school of historical fiction. It is brutal and violent, and all the light to be found in it comes from the author's poetic grace.

Peerless Flats
by Esther Freud
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $19.95)

DESPITE name changes, this novel is recognizably the sequel to the youthful author's excellent first, "Hideous Kinky," a title that could well apply here. Sixteen-year-old Lisa, daughter of a hippie and a bookie, sister of a drug addict, and half sister of a little boy fixated on foxes, comes to London to become an actress. At school, she is given Stanislavskian exercises in creating an illusion and Brechtian ones in destroying illusion: "Really she just wanted to be Julie Christie in *Doctor Zhivago* and wear a fur hat and a tailored coat." In real life, she tries various drinks and drugs, because she is too embarrassed to just say no; in the hope that love will follow, she allows a virtual stranger to have sex with her. Her family doesn't notice when Lisa, who's known as the "sensible" one, becomes neurotically unable to eat—her family doesn't really notice her, period. The book, like its predecessor, is not as grim as an outline may suggest: complicated states of mind are evoked with astonishing ease and also, luckily, with humor and affection.

GENERAL

New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1869-1930)
by Elizabeth Hawes
(Knopf; $30)

THIS astute and enchanting study of urbanization uses New York as an instance and offers close readings of particular buildings to illuminate American society and architecture. Although multiple dwellings had long been accepted in Europe, Hawes tells us, in America the mere concept evoked innumerable anxieties, many rooted in distrust of city life. During the nineteenth century, however, cities and city populations expanded inexorably, and in New York many of the well-to-do lived in narrow, dark, inconvenient houses of little architectural merit. The earliest apartment house, the Stuyvesant, built on East Eighteenth Street in 1869, was the work of Richard Morris Hunt, who in 1857 had designed the Studio Building, on West Tenth Street, which combined working and living space for artists. Although the Stuyvesant did attract some members of old New York society, decades of effort went into persuading the city's middle and upper classes that apartments were suitable for respectable people. Over the years, speculators learned, by trial and error, what tenants wanted. New Yorkers were lured out of their brownstones by the latest technology, and while the evolution of the luxury apartment house demonstrated a persistent confusion of elegance with ostentation, it also brought simplicity and convenience to the work of housekeeping.

Deliberate Indifference: A Story of Murder and Racial Injustice
by Howard Swindle
(Viking; $22.50)

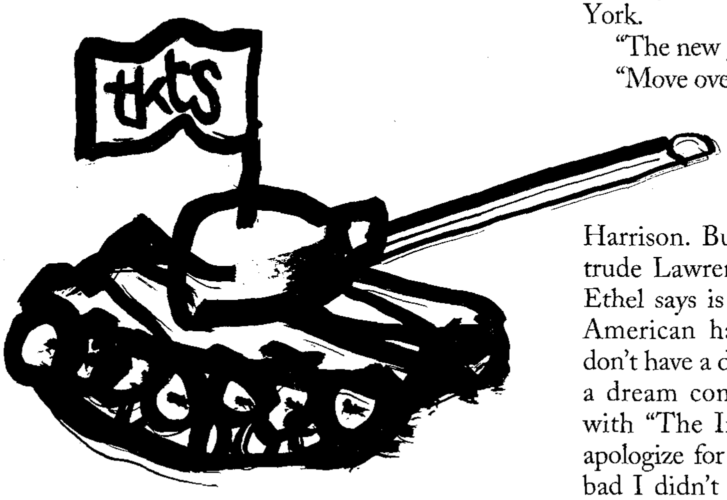
LOYAL GARNER, JR., a young black man, was arrested in his pickup by a white police chief for a misdemeanor on an East Texas highway on Christmas Day, 1987. He was taken to the jail in the small town of Hemphill, and there the chief beat him on the head with a blackjack so viciously that he died. His offense, apparently, was that he had demanded to be allowed to call home. The probability that this atrocious act would ever be brought to light, or that the chief and his collaborators at the jail would ever be brought to book for it, was extremely remote, considering the locality and the general outlook on life of its ruling class. Nevertheless, the murder did emerge. In this brilliantly executed recapitulation the author describes the frantic efforts of the people of Hemphill to bury the evidence of the crime, to rally around the lawmen, and, as members of a jury, to summarily acquit them, and goes on to relate how Garner's family, against all odds, finally triumphed in federal court. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

BROADWAY, 2003: THE NEW GENERATION ARRIVES

BY JOHN GUARE

THEATRE historians, take note. I arrive here in New York City today, May 17, 2003, only four months and a hundred and forty-three years after Anton Chekhov's birthday—and if *that's* not a sign! I get off the bus and shake my play-filled suitcase into the sky, screaming, "Broadway, I'll lick you yet!" I run over to Times Square. Part of an enormous ad for Japanese underwear still hangs over that bomb site where the Music Box used to be. I see only one tank with soldiers at the half-price tkts booth on Forty-seventh Street, and read a sign assuring theatregoers that the United Nations peacekeeping forces will make every attempt to get "Cats," "Aspects 2," and "Bridges" safely through a performance. Three shows—that's a big improvement over last year, when everything On, Off, and Off Off was shut. I minored in theatre history, so I'm familiar with this art violence that started two years ago, when that armed group called JujamSomething broke into the Shubert Theatre during a preview of "The Bridges of Madison County" and hijacked at gunpoint the entire cast, the scenery, the orchestra, the audience, and Andrew Lloyd Webber himself across the street to their St. James Theatre. The Nederlanders then joined up with their former blood rivals the Shuberts to get "Bridges" back and rescue the composer, but we all know how that sad story ended.



Oh, there's the plaque marking the tragic spot. What a nice statue of Patti LuPone weeping!

A lot of old-time theatre people died in that action, but I agree with my theatre teachers, who said that it was justified by the amount of money at stake. Hadn't regional theatre generated eight hundred million dollars that year, and hadn't Broadway grossed two billion? There's more money on Broadway than in many small countries that sit at the United Nations. Half-price tickets are $92.50, but they taught us in drama class that the prime motive for theatre is to keep the investors happy. The investors now have the most power in the peace discussions. It's a complicated situation, how they had Tony Kushner arrested in 1999 for changing his writing style and endangering their financial return. I mean, if I could write something like "Angels in America" why would I ever want to change my style? Kushner's still in prison, but he won't write the old way. He said he wants to grow. I guess success went to his head.

I smell fire in the air. I'm suddenly scared. Is there any place to do plays? Lincoln Center Theatre could only get grants to be a day-care center, and the Public did so many community-outreach programs it stopped doing plays altogether and is now a hospice.

Across the street from the tkts booth I hear singing coming from a cardboard box covered with pencil-written signs reading "Chorus Line Back Again!" I lift up the flap and see two ancient derelicts of indeterminate gender singing a medley of "I" songs: "I Got Rhythm" and "I Gotta Be Me." They thank me for coming backstage and say it's a shame I'm here tonight because last night was so much better. They hold ushers' flashlights under their chins and grin. They tell me they are Ethel Merman and Mary Martin. I announce proudly that it's my first day in New York.

"The new generation, Mary!"

"Move over, Ethel!"

I crouch under the spray-painted caricatures on the walls of their box. I think I've heard of Rex Harrison. But not Ed Wynn or Gertrude Lawrence. Or Helenaise, which Ethel says is something you spread on American ham. Mary sings, "If you don't have a dream, how you gonna have a dream come true?" Ethel responds with "The Impossible Dream." They apologize for the tanks, and say it's too bad I didn't see New York in the old days. But it's always been a tough world. Was it easy for Tennessee Williams working in a shoe factory? Eugene O'Neill running off to sea? Aeschylus coming to Athens? These are my days, and I'm going to make them great. Sure, the city's a battlefield, but sometimes a battlefield is a place where you win victories. "We could make music out of that," they say. And they do! I'm on Broadway only a few minutes and already they're singing my words! The cardboard flap opens, and a hand flings in some pennies. Ethel and Mary kiss me. "He's brought us luck, Mary! His first day in New York, and already the money's pouring in!" ♦

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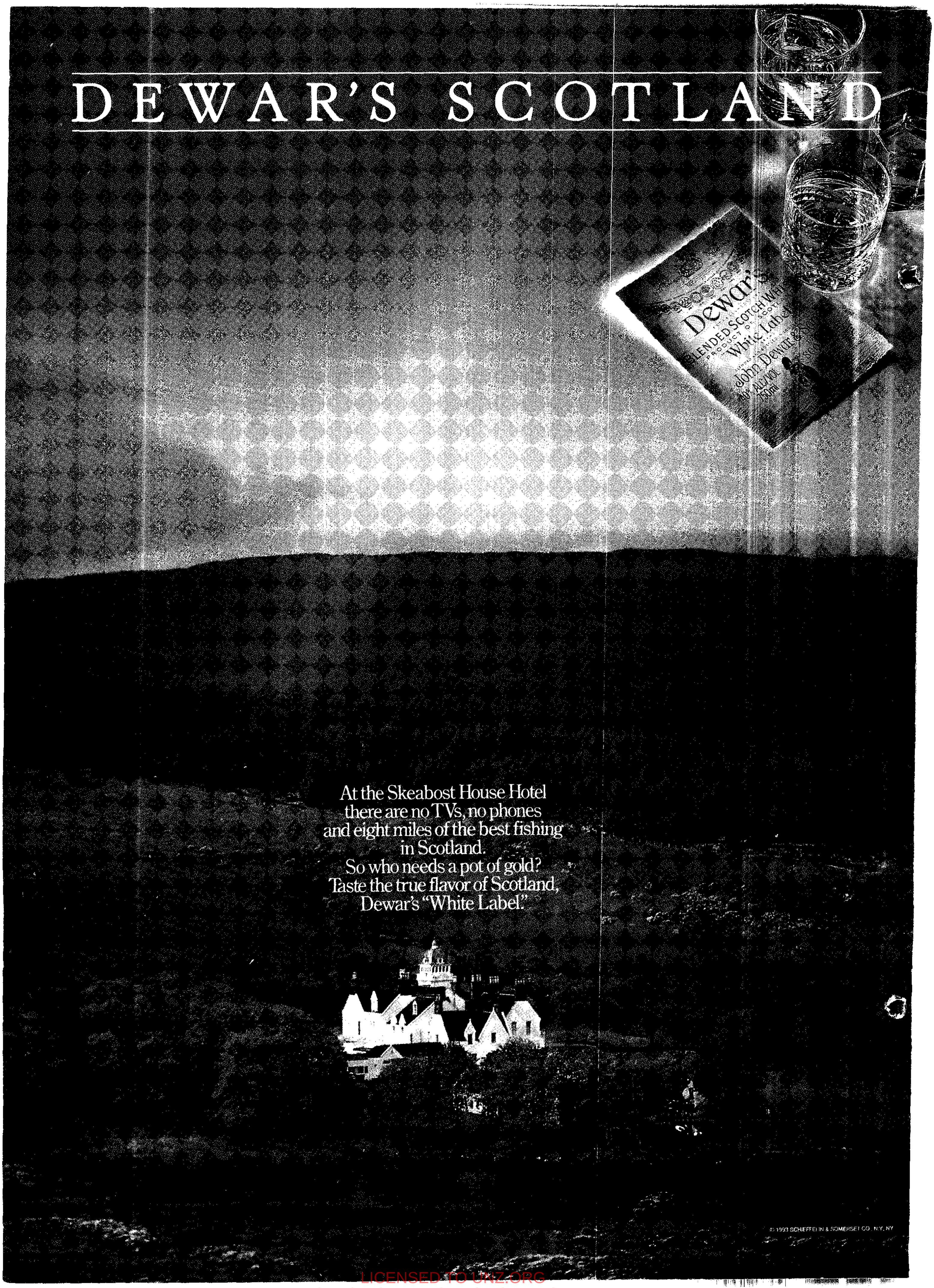
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